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PM Modi talks of Miyawaki forests in Mann ki Baat: What is this method, also being used in Mumbai

PM Modi gave the example of a Kerala-based teacher, Raafi Ramnath, who used the Miyawaki technique to transform a barren land into a mini forest.

Written by [Pratip Acharya](#)

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A Miyawaki garden in Chandivali. According to the civic body's data, 64 Miyawaki forests have been planted in Mumbai so far. (Express photo)

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his latest 'Mann ki baat' episode spoke about Miyawaki plantation, the Japanese method of creating dense urban forests in a small area. The PM also cited the example of a Kerala-based teacher, Raafi Ramnath, who used the Miyawaki technique to transform a barren land into a mini forest called Vidyavanam by planting 115 varieties of trees.

Meanwhile, to fight climate change, curb pollution levels, and increase the green cover of the financial capital, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has been creating Miyawaki forests in several open land parcels of Mumbai.

What is the Miyawaki plantation method?

Named after Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, this method involves planting two to four different types of indigenous trees within every square metre. In this method, the trees become self-sustaining and they grow to their full length within three years.

The methodology was developed in the 1970s, with the basic objective to densify green cover within a small parcel of land.

The plants used in the Miyawaki method are mostly self-sustaining and don't require regular maintenance like manuring and watering.

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Over the years, this cost effective method has become the go-to solution for the civic body to restore the green cover in a space-starved city like [Mumbai](#).

How is Miyawaki useful?

The dense green cover of indigenous trees plays a key role in absorbing the dust particles of the area where the garden has been set up. The plants also help in regulating surface temperature. Some of the common indigenous plants that are used for these forests include Anjan, Amala, Bel, Arjun and Gunj.



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With several infrastructure projects like real estate metro rail construction in progress in Mumbai over the past few years, it was recorded that the surface temperature in certain pockets of Mumbai has increased. Therefore, to fight this challenge, such forests are being created.

At the industrial neighbourhood in Marol (Andheri East), the BMC is creating an urban forest with the Miyawaki method. “These green patches play a major role in regulating the carbon levels of a given area, which may in return help in maintaining a clean year. Also, these forests encourage new biodiversity and an ecosystem is developed around it, which in turn increases the fertility of the soil and regulates surface temperature,” said Jeetendra Pardeshi, superintendent of BMC’s garden cell, which is implementing this project.

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Which other areas in Mumbai have such forests?

According to the civic body’s data, 64 Miyawaki forests have been planted in Mumbai so far. The Miyawaki drive was launched under BMC’s urban forest project on January 2, 2020 and the first such forest was created in Bhakti Park at Chembur in the eastern suburbs.

The largest Miyawaki forest under this project was created at Chandivali’s Nahar Amrut Shakti Udyan, wherein over 41,000 plants were planted over 13 acres.

Civic officials said that more than 4,00,000 trees have been planted in these 64 forests so far. The BMC’s Garden cell had earmarked 1,100 plots across Mumbai for setting up these forests, back in 2020, out of which more than 60 have been completed.

What are the plans for the future?

In the next one year, the BMC aims to create 14 more urban forests by planting 80,400 trees of various indigenous species. Pardeshi said that Chief Minister [Eknath Shinde](#) has given the BMC a target of planting 1,00,000 saplings by the end of this year in various plots that have been earmarked for this project.

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The civic body said that some of the new Miyawaki forests are expected to be developed at an open plot close to BEST Colony, Chandivali's Swami Vivekanand Udyan and a plot at Jogeshwari's Mahakali caves road, which, with a total bank of 30,000 plants, is going to be the largest in the project.

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