

KERALA

# A mini forest coming up in the Venice of the East

**Sam Paul A.**

ALAPPUZHA:, OCTOBER 08, 2020 19:04 IST

UPDATED: OCTOBER 08, 2020 19:50 IST

## Miyawaki forest being cultivated on 20 cents in Port Museum compound in Alappuzha



The district cannot boast of a jungle teeming with flora and fauna. It is a land with no wilderness. The only exception is a 14.5 acres of land at Veeyapuram, a proposed reserve forest, which is home to a small number of plant and animal species and a few private forests in small tracts of land.

But things are changing. The Alappuzha municipal area sandwiched between the Arabian sea and Vembanad Lake is set to host a mini forest in the near future. The Kerala Development and Innovation Strategy Council (K-DISC) has joined hands with a consortium involving Thiruvananthapuram-based Nature's Green Guardians Foundation, Culture Shoppe and Invis

Multimedia to create a forest on 20 cents of land on the premises of Port Museum, which is being set up as part of the Heritage Project, using the Miyawaki method.

## **3,200 saplings**

As part of creating the mini forest, 3,200 saplings of 100 species will be planted there. “As the population increases, natural resources are depleting. Our aim is to reinstate the green cover where there is a deficiency of it. Using this model of intense foresting will increase biodiversity and create an ecosystem. Planting operations are in progress and in three years it will take the shape of a dense forest,” says Hari Prabhakaran, Director, Nature’s Green Guardians Foundation.

## **Indigenous species**

Majority of the saplings being planted are of indigenous species. They include medicinal and fruit-bearing plants. Apart from supporting local wildlife, the mini forest will help in sequestration of carbon. The land for planting saplings was prepared by adding cow dung and other organic fertilizers to the soil to make it more fertile.

Miyawaki is a technique introduced by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki that revolutionised urban afforestation by creating dense and native forests. It involves planting several native species in a small area and making it a self-sustaining green space in three to four years.

The K-DISC is funding the programme.