

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Unique afforestation method gains popularity in Thiruvananthapuram



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M.R. Hari at his 'forest' at Puliyaarakonam, Thiruvananthapuram.

Miyawaki method involves growing verdant patches on a few cents of land

An urban jungle in three cents of land? As Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki turns 91 on Tuesday, he would be thrilled to know that his unique afforestation method is gaining popularity in **Thiruvananthapuram**, a city far away from his homeland.

“The Miyawaki method is ideal for urbanscapes where a few cents of land can be set aside to grow tiny patches of forests,” says M.R. Hari, managing

director of Invis Multimedia, who successfully demonstrated the concept on his plot of land at Puliyaarakonam in Thiruvananthapuram district.

More recently, the State Tourism Department has decided to throw open a Miyawaki park at the Kanakakkunnu Palace Grounds, which has been set up on five cents of land with the support of Nature’s Green Guardians Foundation and Invis Multimedia, which acts as ICT solutions provider for the department.

800 saplings

At the Kanakakkunnu grounds, 800 saplings belonging to over 100 species on the five cents were planted January 2. “Now, there will be a waiting period of three months, so that the plants can take root,” says P.S. Hari, managing director, Nature’s Green Guardians Foundation.

At his own land on a hillock at Puliyaarakonam, M.R. Hari has already experimented the Miyawaki concept with success, but plans to add to it until he has 10 ‘forests’ on three cent plots each. Here, he already has over 400 species in his nano forest that include emergent trees, shrubs, climbers and trees. The Miyawaki method, according to him, involves the removal of soil to one metre depth and filling it with a mixture that includes soil, cowdung and coir pith.

Planting a forest using the Miyawaki concept will cost around ₹1.5 lakh per cent, M.R Hari says. “There are two challenges; one is the rate of growth and then, the area of land, as neighbours will worry that your ‘forest’ will attract snakes and unwanted reptiles,” he says.

Hari’s Invis Multimedia has also taken the concept to high-altitude Munnar where the Miyawaki method is being tried out on five cents of land with the support of the organisation Agriculture and Ecosystem management Group (Ages).