

Kollam ashram prepares ground for Miyawaki forest

Our Correspondent

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Kollam: A Japanese-model Miyawaki forest is taking shape at Ashramam Grounds here as part of an afforestation drive. Almost 90 per cent of the saplings planted belong to local species while the remaining are foreign varieties.

Over 100 types of plants have been planted, including medicinal herbs. 'Chembakam', wild gooseberry, 'kadamba', 'chamba', almonds, 'mandaram', 'parijatham' and guava are among them.

Miyawaki forests are artificially created on small plots of land in a short period of time. It is a brainchild of Prof Akira Miyawaki, a Japanese botanist. In Kerala, such a forest had earlier come up at Kanakakkunnu Palace ground in Thiruvananthapuram. Miyawaki forests are believed to help prevent ecological problems such as climate change.

In Kollam, the forest is being created by Nature's Green Guardian Foundation and Culture Shoppy under the supervision of Kerala Forest Department and Tourism Department. Three to five saplings are planted on a one-square metre area under the Miyawaki scheme. At Ashramam, the number is four, including that of a big tree, medicinal herb and a fruit plant. In this manner, as many as 3,205 saplings have been planted on a 20-cent plot at Ashramam. These saplings would be taken care of properly for three years and to enable proper growth, the branches would be pruned until the plants reach a certain height.

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