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Miyawaki Method

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Why is in news? Know more about Miyawaki Method: PM in his Mann Ki Baat mentioned Miyawaki, a Japanese method of afforestation

Miyawaki is a method created by a **Japanese botanist named Akira Miyawaki**. It helps forests grow quickly and become thick and natural.

It has **revolutionised the concept of urban afforestation** by turning backyards into mini-forests.

This method includes planting trees (only native species) as close as possible in the same area which not only saves space, but the planted saplings also support each other in growth and block sunlight reaching the ground, thereby preventing the growth of weed.

The saplings become maintenance-free (self sustainable) after the first three years.

The approach is supposed to **ensure that plant growth is 10 times faster** and the **resulting plantation is 30 times denser than usual**.

Miyawaki method helps to **create a forest in just 20 to 30 years**, while through conventional methods it takes anywhere between 200 to 300 years.

The process involves improving the soil by covering it with mulch, which also **helps prevent dryness, erosion, and weed growth**.

Native trees are then identified and planted in the area. This method involves **planting many different types of trees close together**, which creates a balanced and cooperative environment among the species.

Miyawaki forest plantation:

Unlike commercial forestry, in Miyawaki Forestry, **only native varieties of plants are selected** in specific ratios and sequences, creating multilayer, maintenance-free forests, and 100 percent self-sustainable ecosystems.

In India, this method is slowly gaining momentum and is already in practice in cities like Delhi, Bengaluru.

Miyawaki uses only local species. The forests blend with the local ecosystem, last longer, and can **exist in urban spaces**.

The growth of Miyawaki forests in many patches in and around Bengaluru has helped increase the city's green cover and generated a lot of optimism.

The method is being extensively used in and around Bengaluru by activists, corporate firms as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, and even individuals.

PM in his Mann Ki Baat said, "My dear countrymen, it is the nature of us Indians to be always ready to welcome new ideas. We love our things and also imbibe new things. An example of this is - Japan's technique Miyawaki; if

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the soil in some place has not been fertile, then the Miyawaki technique is a very good way to make that area green again. Miyawaki forests spread rapidly and become biodiversity spots in two to three decades.

Shriman Raafi Ramnath, a teacher from Kerala, changed the scenario of the area with this technique. He went to the extent of creating a herbal garden. His garden has now become a Biodiversity Zone. This success of his inspired him even more. After this, Raafi ji grew a mini forest with the Miyawaki technique and named it - '**Vidyavanam**'.

Now only a teacher can come up with such a beautiful name – 'Vidyavanam'. In the tiny space in this Vidyavanam of Ramnathji, over 450 trees of 115 varieties were planted. His students also help him with their maintenance. School children from the neighbourhood & common citizens throng in hordes to view this beautiful place.

Miyawaki forests can be easily grown anywhere, even in cities.

In the last four years, work has been done on more than 60 such forests in Mumbai and its surrounding areas. Now this technique is being appreciated all over the world. It is **being used extensively in many countries like Singapore, Paris, Australia, and Malaysia**. I would urge the countrymen, especially those living in cities, to make an effort to learn about the Miyawaki method. Through this, you can make an invaluable contribution to making our earth and nature green and clean.”

Concerns:

Such forests **lack some qualities of natural forests**, such as medicinal properties and the ability to bring rain.

Such fast-growing plantations are **actually wood lots** (a parcel of a woodland or forest capable of small-scale production of forest products (such as wood fuel, sap for maple syrup, sawlogs, and pulpwood) **as well as recreational uses** like bird watching, bushwalking, and wildflower appreciation) and cannot be termed as forests.

Several environmentalists have questioned the **efficacy of the method** that accelerates the growth of trees and claims to match a forest's complex ecosystem (as it is not a good idea to force plants to photosynthesize fast).