

A mushrooming model of nature's calendar

Sprouts appear on same day for 3 years in Miyawaki plot

S. ANIL RADHAKRISHNAN
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

It is mushroom time at Mylammoodu, near Puliyaikonam, in the suburbs where popularisation of the Miyawaki afforestation to grow micro-forests was taken up first in this region 10 years ago.

For the third consecutive year, mushrooms have sprouted in the two-acre plot converted into a mini-forest using the Miyawaki technique pioneered by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki.

M.R. Hari, who is behind the massive effort to spread the planting method in the State, is excited as the sprouting of mushroom has taken place on October 28 in his plot since 2017. The sprouting of mushroom on the same day for the third consecutive years is significant when farmers and agriculture scientists are pondering on and debating how to restore nature's calendar.

"All around us, crops are failing, monsoon patterns are wayward, and the soil is barren as nature's calendar



For the third consecutive year, mushrooms have sprouted on the two-acre plot converted into a mini-forest using the Miyawaki technique near Puliyaikonam.

itself is off-balance. Mushrooms appeared for the first time on October 28, 2017, a positive sign that the soil was regaining its natural features. To my astonishment, mushrooms came up precisely on the same day this year, October 28, 2019. It is a wonder," says Mr. Hari showing the old pictures in my timeline in Facebook.

He believes the right mix of moisture, shade or cloudy weather and rich organic material in the soil has resulted in the above-ground fruiting bodies of fungi that live in the soil. Burning and tilling of the soil was avoided and maximum care was gi-

ven to the soil by planting plantains in tubs and discarded paint barrels, says Mr. Hari, Managing Director of city-based Invis Multimedia.

There are 400 varieties of shrubs, herbs to trees in the plot owned by Mr. Hari as a result of the transformation and the Miyawaki afforestation has been adopted in 15 places in the State with the support of the Nature's Green Guardians Foundation, an NGO. Botanist Dan Mathew, who had extended support to Mr. Hari, is of the view that the mushroom sprouting phenomenon has to be studied in depth.