

LS SUGGESTS

Touch of lush amidst the fuss

Dhaka — one of the most densely populated cities in the world. Moments after taking off in an airplane, the entire city looks like one gigantic and dense block of Lego buildings. Not to mention the buildings are adjacent to the point where you can often literally hear the neighbours talking in their rooms.

In this maze of alleyways and concrete buildings, a touch of greenery is always welcome. Although modern architecture involves adding foliage and open space to buildings, most old buildings do not have this opportunity. Due to the lack of space and property prices, a garden space is a distant fantasy for most residents of Dhaka.

Many people who hold a fascination towards gardening resort to creating their own mini-gardens on their roof or balconies. While this is a smart idea for households with minimal space, better and modern ways are emerging. Vertical gardens are one such modern trend that has been recently mushrooming on the buildings of Dhaka.

The concept of vertical gardening is simple — we grow plants on the walls rather than on the floor. There are various ways you can go about it; covering an entire wall with greenery by your house's entrance, gutter gardens around your house's name plate, placing a pallet planter in your living room, or simply hanging pots in your balcony.

You can get creative with vertical gardening!

Among all the common ideas, there is one inventive way of vertical gardening that also involves recycling bottles. You may have seen this as a part of decoration in some restaurants; a fancy glass bottle corked up and filled with soil with a plant popping from it. Seems fancy and costly, but it does not have to be expensive in your case. You can simply reuse the plastic bottles lying around your house to create this artistic background.

Although hanging plants mid-air and pots on suspended shelves look aesthetically pleasing, this is not the only reason for vertical gardening. Vertical gardens can provide a prompt and easy

supply of kitchen herbs that are needed while cooking. You can grow your mint, coriander and basil right in your small pots and avoid the hassle of a trip and bargaining with the vendor for a bunch of these.

When we pass by many residential areas, a common view is to see entire walls of greenery with lines of vines and creepers. They either stick on walls or loosely hang by strings from above. This bright blanket of green, mainly consisting of ivy and ferns, is yet another form of vertical garden. Along with an eye-catching appearance, the lush exterior works as the lungs of the building literally allowing it to breathe.

Furthermore, it is a matter of fact that these plants play a key role in keeping your surrounding air clean. As they filter out the harmful elements from the atmosphere, they provide a cleaner air to breathe, promoting healthier environment. While the level of air pollution in Dhaka keeps soaring, this can be your small attempt to reduce its harmful effects towards your family and neighbours.

With record breaking temperatures, vertical gardens in your house will also help to curtail its effects. Vertical gardens on the exterior walls and facade of the house are great sources of protection from temperature variations, the sun's harmful UV rays and heavy rainfall. A process called evapotranspiration, which combines the two processes of evaporation and transpiration, helps to keep the surrounding temperatures down. It works like a natural air conditioner and that too, free of cost!

A touch of lush amidst all the fuss helps to calm the mind. Vertical gardening is slowly creeping up within the concrete jungle of Dhaka. This form of vegetation has more reasons than only aesthetics. The practice is gradually embedding itself as a part of our lifestyle. Whether done out of hobby or in need of emergency kitchen supplies, vertical gardening is a true form of art that you can customise.

By Fariha Amber



How can vertical gardening prevent dengue?

House plants and vertical gardening have another interesting appeal. In light of the recent outbreaks of dengue fever, these little pots and plants can create a minion arsenal of their own to prevent it. Fight dengue and beautify your home garden with some little adjustments at the same time.

We all know that dengue fever is caused by the spread of aedes aegypti mosquitoes looming around. We can comprise simple habits in our lifestyle to prevent it from spreading and vertical gardening can be your weapon!

This species of mosquitoes is particularly very sensitive to smell. By growing a few selected herbs, you can stave them off. A popular plant that all Dhaka indoor gardeners grow is mint. The strong and energising aroma of mint is fancied by us, but not by mosquitoes! Housing this plant will keep them at bay.

Two additional herbs that will keep mosquitoes afar are basil and rosemary. Basil is a first choice when it comes to houseplants. You can tear off the leaves and directly rub on your wrists for more protection. Although rosemary is not yet prevalent among Dhaka residents, they are widely available in large supermarkets with a plant section. Rosemary is also a fragrant herb used in cooking. It is always handy to have a stock of these right at your disposal.

A great addition to your vertical garden in terms of both beauty enhancement and prevention is marigold flowers. Marigold is synonymous to typical Bangladeshi flowers. Their vibrant orange and yellow shades add a pop of colour to any dull surrounding. The strong smell diffusing from them prevents mosquitoes from lingering around in your house.

Opting for these particular plants will aid you in several ways, whether for cooking or shooing away mosquitoes. However, you should also note that mosquitoes prevail in soggy places. Thus, it is of paramount importance that you take extra preventive measures. Such measures include loosening soil in potted plants, removing stagnant water from pots, changing water from vases and clearing fallen leaves regularly.

Do not let your technique of prevention be a source of prevalence. Happy gardening!

By Fariha Amber

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed



ফাস্ট ওয়াশ

সাদা আব এক নাম





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