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TAKE A TOUR

COLLEGE GREENS

From being home to rose garden, blackberry orchard to natural dye yielding plants, educational institutes in the City are certainly lush green and vibrant!



Photos • Irfana

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It's the City's green cover that has helped Bhubaneswar establish its individual identity on a tourist's sketch map. And, where can you find the green spots? Parks, streets or tourists sites—these are obvious destinations! When you think of the greens here, the college campuses aren't to be skipped. Several institutes and colleges in the City have laid special emphasis on plantation and beautification of the campuses with decorative plants. In fact, plantation and gardening are the priorities in their design plans or campus life. *The City Express* explores some of the college campuses and their gardens to bring you what's rare and best!

Besides its avenue plantation, what's exclusive to the campus of KIIT University is an extensive rose garden. With 5,000 flower-bearing plants, the garden is home to 300 varieties of roses. The garden came up on the campus in 2011. Each year, the institute also participates in various flower shows across the State. "We have adopted themes for avenue plantation. We also have 40,000 flower plants in pots at different corners of the campus. During the recently-concluded World Congress of Poets, we added 6,000 more potted plants," said Sudarshan Panda, director of horticulture at KIIT university. On campus, saplings are also prepared for plantation. The rows of palm trees and pergolas with fast-growing creepers creates more shade on the campus. Another interesting feature of the vegetation at KIIT is its garden of hibiscus and sculptures. A brain child of Panda, the sculpture garden is one-of-its-kind. "We have used



IIT Bhubaneswar

decorated rock sculptures with plants and creepers," he added.

The garden at NIFT Bhubaneswar is more about utilitarian needs for a sustainable future. On its 10.4 acres campus, the staff has planted natural dye-yielding plants in the garden sprawling over 2.5 acres. The natural dye garden, unique to NIFT Bhubaneswar campus, has around 60 varieties of locally-grown natural dye plants. "We are also experimenting with locally grown natural fibre plants like bombax, kanaf, okra, banana, sisal, pineapple, jute, cotton and flax. The fibres extracted from these plants will be used for making attires. We are the only fashion institute centre in the country to have taken such an initiative towards farm to fashion concept," said NIFT director Binay Bhusan Jena. The institute has also done feeder plant plantation for sericulture and kept bee boxes on the campus

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to facilitate pollination.

In the lush green campus of IIT Bhubaneswar, plantation is a subject of constant research and development. Not just the horticulturists, but the institute's director RV Raja Kumar and two more faculty members themselves research about different species of plants and supervise any plantation activity on the campus. As the institute claims, even the plantation here has been engineered with proper design plans. For ornamentation palm trees

have been planted close to the buildings or in the median. At the entrance of buildings and the first rows, you will find mid or small-sized plants. In the second rows of plantation, the trees are taller. The institute has a vast orchard of 62 varieties of mangoes. There are separate orchards for 'amla' (Indian gooseberry) and blackberries. For creation of wellness environment on the campus, special emphasis has been laid on grass.

Interestingly, the institute has flowering plants of non-toxic varieties. "Most of the flowering varieties we have chosen is of the non-toxic type. These attracts a lot of bees and insects. Therefore, the honey that's extracted from the bee-hives on the campus is non-toxic," the director said. Plantation is a serious business for IIT Bhubaneswar. So much so that the institute gets saplings from nurseries in West Bengal, different districts of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Pune. Moreover, gardening is wisely-used as a productive penalty for the defaulting students. Whenever a student fails to comply with the campus rules or guidelines, he or she is asked to spend some time for gardening. "This is an educational experience in the disguise of punishment for students, who get to learn about plantation," the director added. Situated on the outskirts of City, the institute has also converted barren stretches into greenery.

At SOA university, there are separate gardens for its four campuses. Moreover, huge number of trees are planted on its all premises. Most of the institutes engage their students in gardening and plantation activities through various clubs or National Service Scheme (NSS).