Rapid urbanization – need for retaining gomalas as green spaces in the urban environment

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The global human population was 8 billion in 2022 and it is projected to reach 9 billion by 2031, leading to a significant shift in environmental issues with a decline in biodiversity. We need to develop people-centred cities by 2050, since two-thirds of the total population is going to live in urban areas. Cities grow by urbanization of villages. As the cities grow, biodiversity is challenged. India is the second country in the world, next only to Brazil, where green cover is being significantly lost due to deforestation. Gomalas are the lands in the villages reserved for grazing by animals and serve as a lung space for humans when the villages are urbanized. It is time to act to maintain greenery of the gomalas for sustenance of lives in the urban environment. Maintenance of green cover with biodiversity is essential for sustenance of life. We have nearly 1.75 million species on our planet and many more are yet to be discovered. Biodiversity has continued to decline during the past two decades. Nearly 58% of vertebrates and 51% of freshwater species are now extinct and acceleration of extinction of 1,000–10,000 species is predicted during the next decade due to anthropogenic activities. The World Environmental Day theme for 2024 is to 'Protect, preserve and prosper for a greener future' for all on the planet with living and non-living systems in our environment.

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