



THE PLANTING HERITAGE

Planting Design Studies

The Curious Case Of Evolution Of
Chandigarh's Landscape
Chandigarh
Diya Handa

Plants In The Gardens Of Gurkha Homes
Dharamshala
Divyajyoti Sharma

Vacant Land In Gandhinagar
Gandhinagar
Shruti Jog

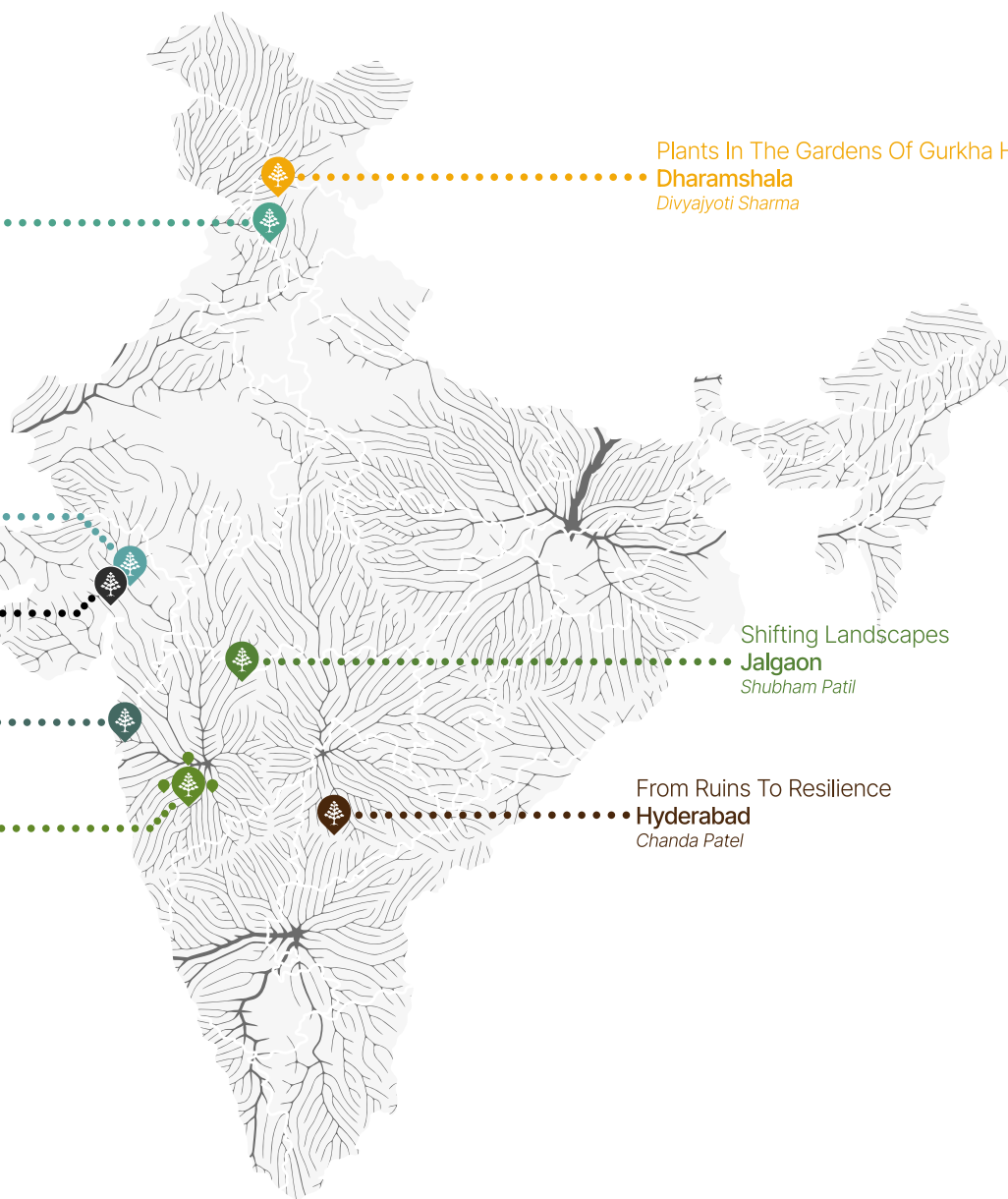
The Embrace Of Vines And Trees
Ahmedabad
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PLANTS IN THE GARDENS OF GURKHA HOMES

by Divyajyoti Sharma

Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, former Indian Army Chief of Staff, famously remarked, *"If a man says he is not afraid of dying, he is either lying, or he is a Gurkha."*

The term "Gurkha" refers to a community that traces its lineage to the 8th-century Hindu warrior Guru Gorakhnath, and has its roots in Nepal's Gorkha district. The martial heritage, courage, and military skills of the Gurkhas were first noticed by the British in 1814 during the Anglo-Nepalese War, leading to their recruitment in the army in 1815. It is when the Gurkhas from Nepal started migrating to India and continued to serve in the Indian Army as the Gurkha regiment even after Independence in 1947. Their bravery in combat, loyalty, professionalism, courage and warmth in daily life is well known.

Many Gurkhas who settled in India chose to stay, particularly in regions near the Himalayan foothills, retaining Nepalese architectural styles, customs, and traditions. Outside the battlefield, Gurkhas are cheerful and hospitable, emphasizing respect for elders and guests, which is central to their culture. Multi-generational households with strong family bonds are common and polite communication is a cultural staple. A typical house of the Gurkhas has wide verandahs, on both the front and back, providing space for social interactions, drying clothes, basking in the sun and enjoying the view of the mountains. Carrying their cultural community practices with them from Nepal, many Gorkha homes in India too have a dedicated garden space called "Ghar Ko Aagan" or the "Home Courtyard." These small courtyards and gardens around the house are often filled with colorful flowers, showcasing the Gurkha community's love for gardening. This traditional garden is not only meant for growing vegetables, but is also an area



Fig 1: Potted plants in houses of the hill communities of Nepal, Gandruk, Pokhara
Source: Author



Fig 2: Seasonal potted plants in Gurung house, Totarani village, Dharamshala, H.P.
Source: Author

where families grow flowers, herbs, and even small fruit trees for daily use and consumption, making it an important part of their daily lives. There is always a silent competition of the households for the title of having the most beautiful “Aagan” in the neighborhood or their village where they love to display their “Phalful” (flowering plants) and “Hariyo” (green plants).

A burst of colors greets you as you pass through the gate into a Gurkhali family's yard and home. The enticing aroma of chicken curry, or freshly pounded sesame chutney fills the air, while pots of various sizes are displayed along the toe walls, sunlit verandah floors, and windowsills. Some even hang from balconies, spilling their beauty and greenery onto the streets and winding pathways below, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere. In every Gurkhali household, whether in a small bustling town or a native village along the mountain, and

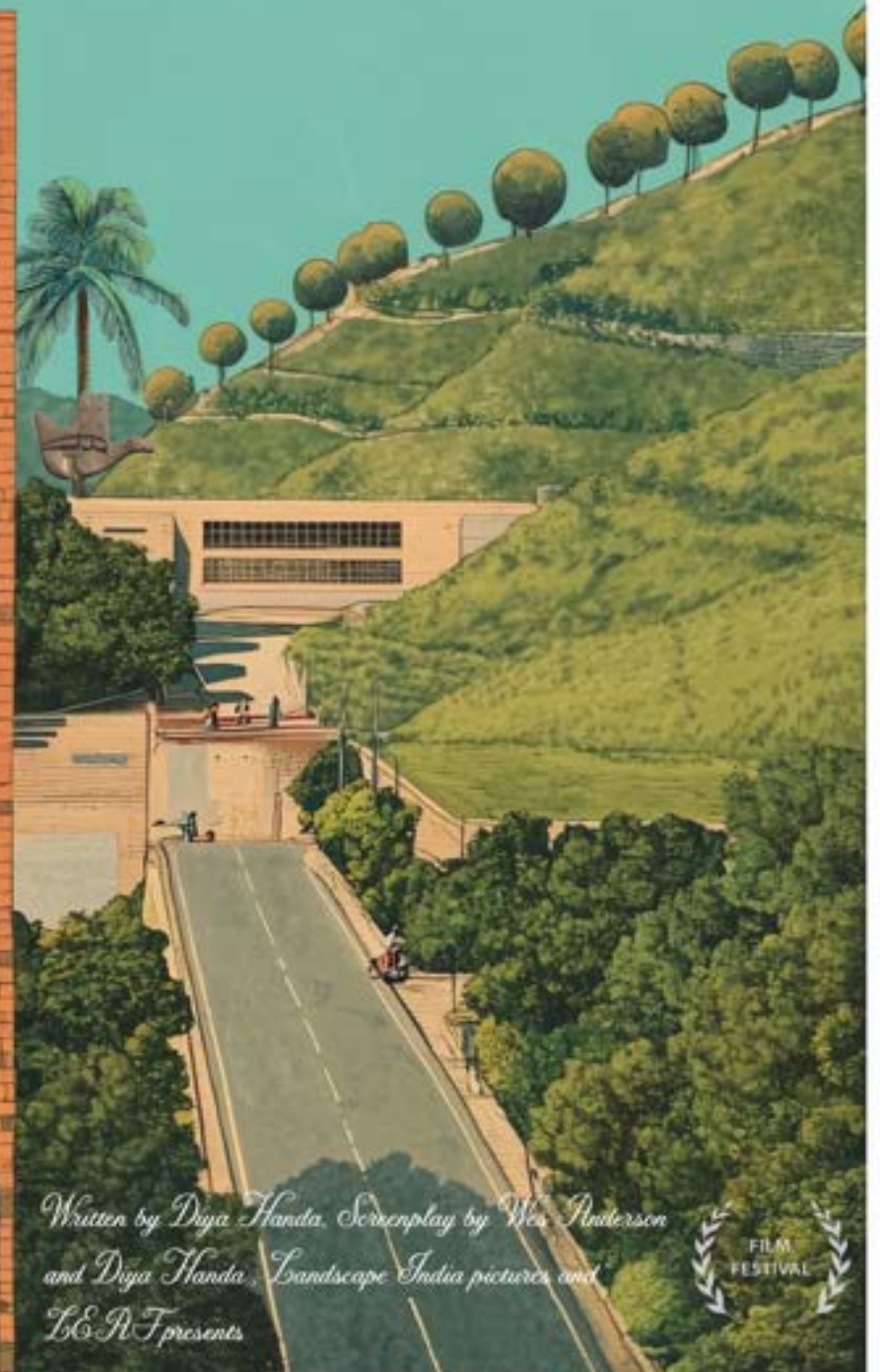
regardless of wealth, it is common to see pots of brightly colored flowers, with certain varieties being absolute favourites. There is always an enthusiasm for flowers—whether geraniums, fuchsias, orchids, poinsettias, or begonias—and the culture of exchanging bulbs, cuttings, and seeds among friends and family. It is exciting to see different color palettes and textures emerge out of a small space!

As spring arrives, 'Aadoo' (peach) and 'Palum' (plum) blossoms grace the landscape, heralding the thawing of snow by early March. The earthy browns of winter gradually transform into vibrant greens and bursts of color. 'Khaske phool' (poppies) and 'Makai phool' (cornflowers) begin to sprout in the kitchen yard, alongside 'Rayo' (mustard flowers) while verandah pots brim with colorful petunias—both single and double whorled. Simultaneously, households eagerly anticipate the annual 'Sunakhari' (Orchids) blooms. The wait is always rewarding, as these flowers, with their striking purple, pink, and white hues, last for a good long period and are proudly showcased to guests. Known for their beauty and ease of care, Sunakhari are prized not only for their aesthetic appeal but also for their value in herbal medicine. They remain the crown jewels of flower enthusiasts, often featured in exhibitions and competitions.

Higher slopes witness an array of flowers, including lilies, tulips, 'Nargis' (daffodils), and the delicate snowdrops that flourish with the onset of spring. This season symbolizes renewal and rejuvenation, a sentiment vividly reflected in Gurkhali homes. Springtime pots are filled with mixed flowers such as 'Putali Phul' (pansies), 'Khukhurmukhe Phul' (snapdragons), and dianthus. Gazanias, in particular, stand out for their resilience, often thriving for over a year, while most other spring blooms last up to seven months. These flowers bring energy and a sense of vitality to any space they adorn. Primroses, with their soft pink and yellow blossoms, are another spring favorite, often used in gardens and indoors. Their petals also find a place in herbal remedies for respiratory ailments. As spring deepens, a subtle fragrance wafts down pathways, it belongs to the thorny creeper roses along retaining walls, stony pathways, and sturdy house walls that begin to bear flowers in shades of white, light pink, and yellow. The tradition of crafting bouquets from yard flowers for visits to relatives or friends during special occasions—birthdays, anniversaries, festivals, or poojas endures to this day, involving both men and women of the household. It shows how nature becomes an indirect link between different families of the community.

THE CURIOUS CASE OF EVOLUTION OF CORBUSIER'S CHANDIGARH'S LANDSCAPE

a Film by Wes Anderson



*Written by Diya Nanda, Screenplay by Wes Anderson
and Diya Nanda, Landscape India pictures and
LEAF presents*



THE CURIOUS CASE OF EVOLUTION OF CORBUSIER'S CHANDIGARH LANDSCAPE

A FILM BY WES ANDERSON

by Diya Handa

Author's Note

Chandigarh is one of the world's first modernist experiment to create a city close to 'utopia'. It was designed to be an epitome of form and function and how to integrate the idea of a garden into a city.

As an architect, who grew up here, I have a very different notion of planting and landscape design. Chandigarh has taught me of 'structural plantation' which binds the city together and landscape design in response to sun and light, seasonal change and form, interstitial greens and buffers, elements of the third landscape and urban layers. The city has a diverse range of forms of plantation styles with different functions.

One day my acquaintance and renowned film maker, Wes Anderson, visited Chandigarh and was awed by the city. He mentioned how it is a place, where each moment, still and moving, is carefully designed, with strong perspectives and symmetry, planimetric composition, order and colours. It has an ephemeral character which evolves emotions with seasons, which many might not understand, but will leave one with a sense of warmth, nostalgia, peace, excitement and life, just like his movies.

We roamed around the city, admiring the tunneling avenues, flowering trees, but we also observed that some strange changes were occurring. Like Sherlock and Watson we inspected the reasons behind these events and this inspired him to create a story about the evolving Landscape of a strongly conceptualised one.

Being the main character, I apologize to anyone if my tone seems too 'architectural', but we all have our ways of perceiving things, don't we?

The story is an Ouija Board which brings back the LAC (Landscape Advisory Committee) of Chandigarh which comprised of eminent people involved in the part of making of Chandigarh.

Plot Context

Chandigarh, the capital city of both Punjab and Haryana, is considered one of the most beautifully planned cities in India. The city's landscaping is not merely a function of aesthetic appeal but is deeply intertwined with its architecture, urban planning and the lives of the city's inhabitants.

It has been almost 60 years since the city's softscape was established. Its trees are one of the oldest inhabitants and the gardens, sector greens remain an integral part of the lives of the people.

But the past few years have seen an intriguing change in the plantation design of the city. Is it ominous, exciting or exemplary?

The team of architects and the LAC (Landscape Advisory Committee) of Chandigarh are back from the dead to visit the city which they designed with their heart and soul. They are being picked up by a young architect CG (The girl with the Converse Shoes), who aspires to work with ecology.

The authoritative members are LC (Le Corbusier- Principal Architect of Chandigarh Capitol Project) and Dr. M.S. Randhawa (The head of LAC and Chief Landscape head of Chandigarh Capitol Project).

DISCLAIMER: This movie is like a visual essay, made for the purpose of questioning and empathizing with the process of designing when it comes to working with flora. This film does not intend to offend anyone, in any way and is only stating observations based on experience.

The movie is a stop motion style animation, because model making is the best medium for a designer to understand scale and to justify the concept of plantation design devised. It was a culmination of the style of Wes Anderson and architects' representation.

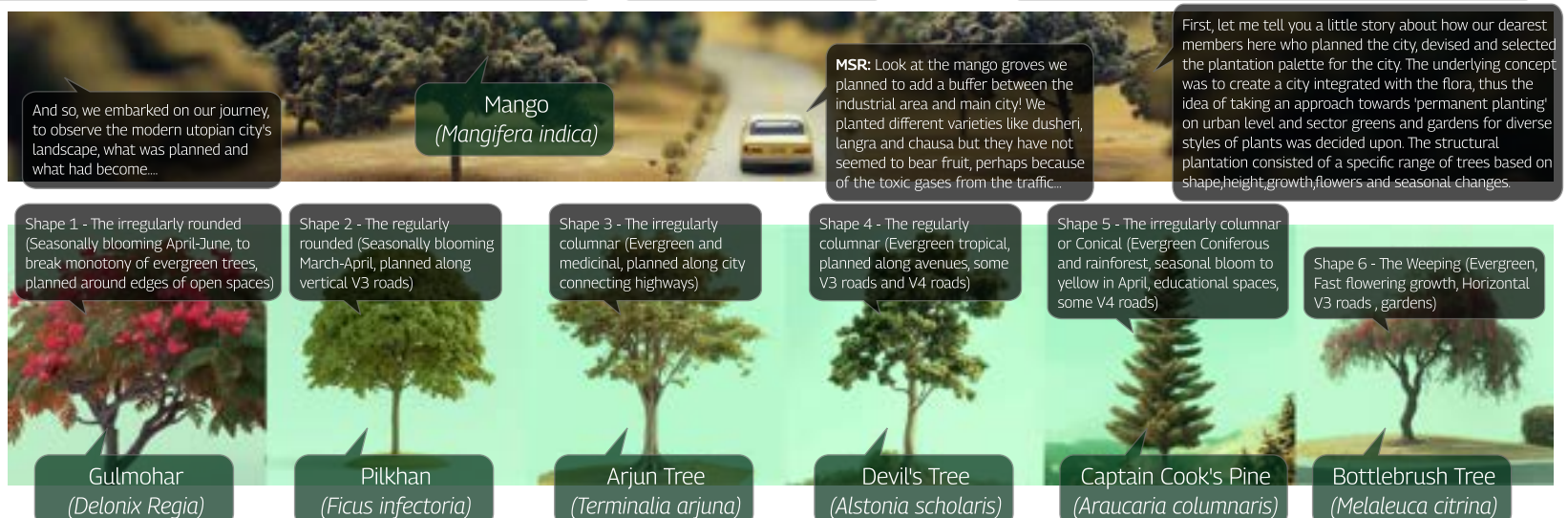
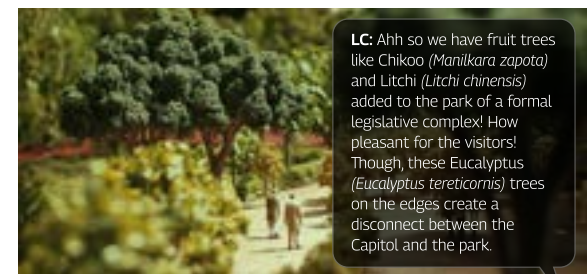
Abbreviations

CG: The girl with the converse shoes

LC: Le Corbusier

MSR: Dr. M. S. Randhawa





PARASBAUG

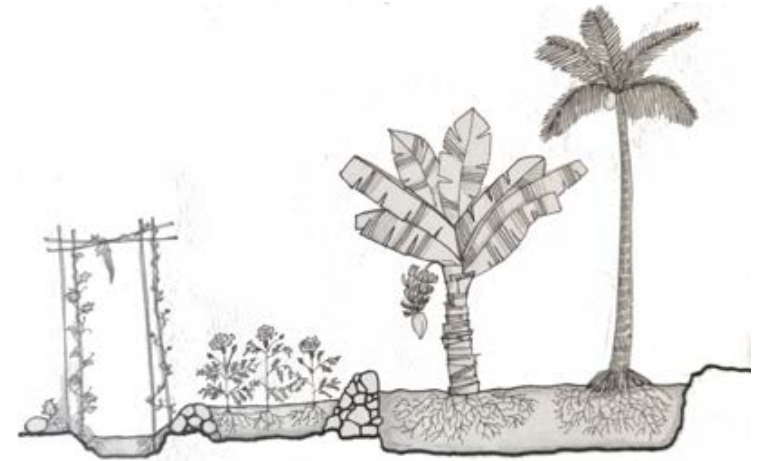
by Anagha Palekar

Parasbaug' is a term used for backyard-based kitchen gardens, found in the villages of Maharashtra. 'परस' (Paras) is a Sanskrit word that has multiple meanings depending on the context. Here, 'परस' suggests nearness, proximity, or closeness.

Parasbaug is a well-known traditional planting practice in the Konkan region. Its origin can be found in how traditional people cope with the danger of starvation arising from unpredictable fluctuations in food supply earlier. Still, it has a facet of the 'house garden' concept.

Its design intent is based on soil depths, the flow and volume of wastewater from kitchens and bathrooms, seasons and also as per family members' needs and interests. The plant list varies region and season wise. It is a live lab since it is a continuous process to understand external factors and change accordingly. It has become one of the on-going processes; part of majority households in the Konkan region.

The aim is to study and document common design parameters of Parasbaug spatially, which are still practised in the Konkan region.



A Parasbaug is characterized by its diverse and sustainable practices. It typically features diverse planting, with a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers coexisting.

Mixed cropping is another hallmark, where multiple crops are grown together, promoting biodiversity and reducing pests. Traditional farming methods are employed, relying on organic practices that avoid synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.

Furthermore, Parasbaugs often utilize wastewater from kitchens; a majority of plants in Parasbaugs possess extensive and efficient root systems that play a crucial role in purifying kitchen wastewater.



Parasbaug at Ratnagiri, August 2024. The spread is around 2,000 sq. ft.

Methodology

To study parameters, after vising many Parasbaugs in the Konkan region. Below four case studies are selected for analysis and assessments.

Overall, the Konkan region has hilly topography with highly drainable lateritic and non-lateritic soils. It doesn't have continuous flat lands similar to the deccan plateau. In such regions plantation parameters or landscape design approaches vary as compared to typical plantation practices. These parameters have been passed from generation to generation, by emulation and experiments without any literature or graphical records.

To find common threads in these approaches, four case studies have been selected and measured into same matrix. This process is expected to provide a spatial understanding and tentative planting pallet as guidelines to design a 'Parasbaug'.



Site 1: Dange Parasbaug, Hatkhamba

Site 2: Dhanmer Parasbaug, Dahanu, Palghar

Site 3: Aranyak Parasbaug, Chiplun

Site 4: Sawantwadi Parasbaug, Sindhudurg

FROM RUINS TO RESILIENCE



Planting Design of the Qutub Shahi Tombs: Balancing Heritage and Ecology

SHIFTING LANDSCAPES

A Personal Journey Through Jalgaon's Evolving Farmlands

by Shubham Patil



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Introduction: A Journey Through Time

Growing up, train journeys through Jalgaon were a ritual of wonder and familiarity. As a child, I remember gazing out of the window, mesmerized by endless stretches of lush green banana plantations - their tall, broad leaves swaying in unison with the rhythm of the train. The landscape felt timeless, a constant backdrop to my travels. The sight of farmers tending to their plantations, the rhythmic processions of bullock carts laden with banana bunches, and the scent of ripening fruit in the air—all of it painted a picture of an agrarian identity deeply rooted in tradition.

But over the years, something changed. The vibrant green fields slowly gave way to golden-yellow patches, the familiar banana canopies replaced by the shorter, denser spread of turmeric crops. The transformation was subtle at first—an isolated plot here, an experimental field there. Eventually, entire landscapes shifted. Jalgaon, once synonymous with banana farming, was evolving into a turmeric hub. The land I had known all my life was telling a different story, one of resilience, adaptation, and survival.

The Legacy of Banana Cultivation: A Childhood Memory

For decades, banana cultivation was more than just an economic activity in Jalgaon—it was a way of life. My earliest memories of visiting local markets are filled with the sight of banana traders negotiating deals, labourers carrying heavy bunches on their shoulders, and the constant chatter of an industry that thrived on this single crop. The deep connection between the community and banana farming was

evident in festivals, traditional practices, and even in the architecture of rural homes, where banana leaves were a staple in decorations and rituals.

Jalgaon's black cotton soil and favourable climate made it an ideal breeding ground for banana plantations. The region prospered, but this prosperity came at a cost. Over time, farmers began facing mounting challenges—water scarcity, declining soil fertility, and market volatility. The very crop that had sustained generations was now becoming an unsustainable burden. Conversations with my elders often revolved around these challenges, as they recalled a time when farming felt more predictable, more rewarding.

A Timeline of Change: The Shift to Turmeric

The transition from banana to turmeric farming was neither abrupt nor accidental. It unfolded over decades, driven by economic, environmental, and cultural shifts.

Below is a timeline of this transformation:

- **1990s – 2000s:** Banana cultivation dominates Jalgaon's agricultural landscape, supported by a robust demand, and government incentives.
- **Early 2010s:** Farmers begin experiencing water shortages and declining soil fertility. Market fluctuations make banana farming less profitable.
- **Mid-2010s:** Experimental turmeric plots appear as farmers seek alternatives requiring less water and chemical inputs.
- **Late 2010s – Early 2020s:** A significant shift towards turmeric farming takes place, driven by increased demand in pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and health industries.
- **Present Day:** Turmeric farming has replaced banana cultivation in many regions, reshaping the economic and ecological fabric of Jalgaon.

Comparing the Two Worlds: Economic and Environmental Lessons
The transition from banana to turmeric is more than a mere change in crop patterns; it represents a fundamental shift in agricultural philosophy. A closer analysis of their differences highlights key lessons, as can be seen in the table on the top right.

Factor	Banana Farming	Turmeric Farming
Water & Soil	High water demand, leading to depletion	Requires significantly less water
Labour & Techniques	Year-round maintenance and intensive input	Labor-intensive, mainly during harvesting
Economic Viability	Market volatility, declining profits	Steady demand with value-added opportunities
Environmental Impact	Creates a dense microclimate, supports biodiversity	More open fields, altered ecosystem balance

Banana farming is intensive, demanding continuous irrigation, while turmeric, requiring nearly half the water, allowing the land to recover. Banana farming requires year-round maintenance, while turmeric, though labour - intensive during harvest, frees up time for other agricultural activities. A steady market for turmeric, combined with its value-added potential (curcumin extraction, powder processing), offers farmers financial stability in a way banana farming no longer could.



