

# Ruia turns drug den into garden

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By OUR CORRESPONDENT

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Mumbai, Feb. 2: Little do the citizens of Mumbai know that Shantivan garden at Napeansea Road was once an illicit drug den. Ms Amla Ruia is the face behind the transformation of this place into a recreational zone. She worked day and night to change the drug den into a garden. Situated a few steps away from the Godrej Baug at Napeansea Road, the garden has now become a famous spot for schools who conduct nature trails there.

Giving details on how it happened, Ms Ruia said,



Amla Ruia

“Mr Amrit Lal Gosalia, a social worker and my neighbour, took note of how anti-social activities were on the rise on the vacant land opposite his apartment. He later learnt that it was a Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation or BMC’s property

**‘Amrit Lal Gosali died two years ago. Later I took up the challenge of transforming this land into a garden’**

and without a second thought, he approached the BMC for utilising the land for a fruitful cause. The land was leased to him on the condition that he would develop it into a garden. Mr Gosali died two years ago. Later I took up the challenge

of transforming this land into a garden.”

However, another resident from the Napeansea Road who comes to practice yoga at Shantivan said, “It was an uphill task for the lady to develop the vacant land into a beautiful spot. The garden is self-sufficient with a water harvesting model, medicinal plants, an amphitheatre etc.”

Ms Ruia, throwing light on the financial aspect, said, “Initially Rs 12 lakhs was required for the development of this garden. The Birla family who are my neighbours donated generously.”