

# Bangalore Mirror

TEMPERATURE MAX 32 | MIN 16 | HUMIDITY 37%

FORECAST MAINLY CLEAR SKY. FOG/MIST VERY LIKELY IN SOME AREAS DURING MORNING HOURS | SUNRISE 06:45 HRS | SUNSET 18:21 HRS

Forty per cent of the 812 trees that might be chopped for the steel flyover can be saved, says Institute of Wood Science and Technology; it has offered to translocate the big trees but civic bodies have not responded yet

## INSTITUTE SAYS IT CAN STOP THE GREENOCIDE



**GREEN WITH ENVY:** The state government is hell-bent on axing these magnificent beauties to make way for the steel flyover from Basaveshwara Circle-Hebbal Flyover

**Nirad Mudur**  
@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @niradMIRROR

A city-based centre of excellence in wood science research is ready to save as many trees as possible from the 812 marked to be axed for two infrastructure projects – the controversial steel flyover from Basaveshwara Circle to Hebbal Flyover and the Jayamahal Road widening.

The Institute of Wood Science & Technology (IWST) – under the Indian Council of Forestry Research

& Education (ICFRE) – has expressed willingness to conduct the study in collaboration with Volvo, which has specialised trucks to translocate trees without damaging them.

Interestingly, while neither the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) nor the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has sought any consultations with the IWST so far, the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute (CMPDI) in Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh has signed a memo-



**BM's front page report on Jan 27**

randum of understanding (MoU) with IWST for a similar study, IWST director Surendra Kumar told Bangalore Mirror on the side-lines of a national conference on "Tree improve-

ment research in India: Current trends and future prospects".

The CMPDI in Singrauli is looking at clearing a cluster of trees to make way for a coal mine in this MP district that borders Uttar Pradesh, for which it is preferring translocation over uprooting them. "We will be preparing a systematic protocol of translocating trees before actually doing it. The protocol is very important," he said, adding that it ensures minimal damage to the tree being shifted.

"At least 40 per cent of

these (812) trees (in Bengaluru) can be translocated safely to roadside locations elsewhere," he said. "If we are asked to carry out a feasibility study, we can easily do so as we have the required capability."

The IWST plans to use tomography, which involves placing sensors on the trees to assess the overall strength, stability and health of the trees.

Tomography uses the sensors to display a representation of a cross-section of the

**TURN TO PAGE 2 >>**

# Wood institute can stop the Greenocide

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tree using X-rays or ultrasound.

The feasibility study also assesses the tree's girth, its age and the method of translocating them to the destination points.

"This also includes pre- and post-translocation treatment for better survival to ensure prevention of pest attacks at the new location and the ideal sunlight exposure, which should be the same as the tree had in its original location," he said.

The steel flyover project is under the BDA while the Jayamahar Road widening project is under the BBMP. But for both the projects the decision over the trees falls under the jurisdiction of the BBMP within city limits.

When contacted, deputy conservator of forests, BBMP, Appu Rao, was not quite aware of the functions of the IWST although the latter dealt with the scientific aspects of trees.

However, when informed, he did show an interest in contacting the institute to find out more details about how at least some trees could be translocated, and save from the axe.

## IWST PROPOSAL GETS NO BBMP RESPONSE

The IWST had also sent a proposal to the BBMP to conduct ward-specific tree health monitoring programme, especially for the roadside trees which get uprooted in the event of thunderstorms, posing a grave threat to life and property. However, there has been no response from the BBMP since the proposal was sent to the civic agency a few months ago.

IWST director Kumar said, "We had sent a proposal to the BBMP for assessing health of avenue trees (the ones lining the roads on either side) in each city ward and maintain a record of each tree's health and fitness. This is important as these are the trees which cause maximum damage to people during thunderstorms."

He said the idea is for the IWST to carry out the inspection with the BBMP as the co-principal investigators. The IWST had plans to use tomography in this too. "Using this system, we can assess the hollowness of the tree trunk, whether the tree is affected by pests, the root system and its spread, as well as the overall strength and stability of the tree," he said.

BBMP's DCF Appu Rao, however, denied having received any such correspondence from the IWST.



BENGALURU  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2017

# THE HINDU

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

## 'City's roads should be lined with sturdier trees'

+

RANJANI GOVIND

**BENGALURU:** More often than not, it is not the number of trees that determine how effective a city's green cover is, but the choice of tree saplings and areas chosen for planting them that add value to the ecosystem. This was the point made clear by tree scientists, geneticists and experts here on Thursday on the sidelines of the first day of the two-day national conference on "Tree improvement research in India: Current trends and future prospects" hosted by the Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST).

"Bengaluru has an overdose of gulmohar and jacaranda trees. They are beautiful flowering trees, but it's not a good idea to have them lining important avenues as these softwood varieties do not endure the harsh weather," said Surendra Kumar, director, IWST. "Their 'fall-out' rate is large, be it because of wind, rain or even road-widening

... they fall apart," he said.

It is not just the softness of the wood that makes the trees buckle under pressure, but their roots get damaged during road-widening, making them weaker. "If the government authorities are informed of this, they can replace the trees with other varieties that are stronger, to make soil health more meaningful," Mr. Kumar said.

There are plenty of trees to choose from. "Pongamia (*Honge*) is a hardy alternative. These trees take only five years to reach a height of 10 metres. They can make up a canopy or be a stately addition to an avenue," said K.S. Sugara, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Karnataka Department of Forests.

According to Mr. Sugara, Bengaluru could bring in varieties such as neem, bamboo, Burma bamboo, sandalwood and red sanders as avenue trees and also on vacant land, as these tree varieties help improve soil quality.



