BACKGROUND TO ISSUES OF BENGALURU TREE COVER

Bengaluru is one of the fastest growing cities in India transforming from a garden city to India's tech capital. The landscape has changed considerably over the last few decades, causing concerns over its thinning green cover. A recent study says the city's green cover has come down alarmingly from 68% in 1973 to 6% in 2017.

Trees have been neglected & unaccounted for. Whether it is to make way for Namma Metro for better connectivity or for widening the roads to accommodate growing traffic, it is the city's green cover that faces the axe first. This reduction of vegetation cover and collateral urbanization have serious implications for a city's environmental and ecological health.

Benglauru has clearly crossed the threshold of urbanization which can be gauged by the increase of psychological, social and health related issues among its residents. Additionally, there have been higher instances of traffic bottlenecks, road accidents, and incidences of diseases such as asthma. A need for overall improvement in human well-being and community vitality make it imperative that Bengaluru sustain at least 33% green cover. In such a case, there needs to be at least 1.15 trees / person in a city. Right now, the city is becoming a lifeless concrete jungle.

Trees in cities are culturally, spiritually and ecologically significant. The ecological uses are oxygen production, reducing effects of pollution, reducing heat stress and regulation of micro-climate.

The following are the issues dogging Bengaluru city with regard to its green cover –

- The Government & BBMP officials conduct an audit for the number of properties, however the number of trees almost always draws a blank

- Never has a tree census for Bengaluru been undertaken properly. given the importance of tree cover, it is imperative that a tree audit also be carried out just like property audit.

- There has been a significant loss of green cover in the city and BBMP's claims of planting trees to compensate for the loss are either not sufficient or false.

- There is also a lack of maintenance of the existing trees.

- Tree committees are non-functional and public consultations and information on public domain is woefully inadequate.

Please find enclosed the list of points on which BNP commits to fight for our trees that support our environment.

Warm Regards,

Team BNP

ನನ್ನ ನಗರ! ನನ್ನ ಹೆಮ್ಮೆ! ನನ್ನ ಜವಾಬ್ದಾರಿ! **My City! My Pride! My Responsibility!**

info@nammabnp.org   nammabnp.org   +91 80 4719 0000   fb.com/nammabnp   @nammabnp

BNP DRAFT MANIFESTO FOR TREES

BNP commits to protect & enhance for our trees & green cover through fighting for the following:

- Protect trees & increase green cover by consciously implementing town planning norms.

- Identify / earmark designated open park places in wards & develop them as lung spaces.

- Carry out a tree-census and use technology for better accountability of trees ward-wise.

- Revive the Tree Committee that was constituted by the High Court and make it fully functional. To help serve their purpose, complete cooperation to be provided from BBMP and due importance in Ward level maintenance to be assured.

- An Environment Impact Assessment via public consultation to be pushed for, before every project like road widening & major construction activities.

- Chopping of old trees without an Environment Impact Assessment to be prohibited and maintenance of green cover ratio to be strictly followed.

- Annual tree plantation drives by BBMP to be monitored closely and a report card giving details of new plantations, development of new species and maintenance of green spaces etc. to be published.

- Bring awareness about The Karnataka Preservation of Trees Act, 1976 to provide some safeguards with regard to cutting, loping of trees illegally.

- Collaborate and work closely with various NGOs and departments like BESCOM, BWSSB, BDA to work with one mission to increase the green cover ward wise, eliminating confusion & chaos due to pruning, chopping resulting in unaccounted damage to trees.

- Emphasise as part of interpretation centres ward-wise working with local communities – residents, RWAs, apartment complexes, schools and so on, the importance of collective improvement of tree cover and ensuring sustained care.

- Ward committees & ward committee meetings to involve tree stakeholders

- In every ward, bring a mix of species, both native and exotic, keeping in mind suitability based on where trees need to be planted as well as other uses such as shade, biodiversity, ease of care, and preference of residents to make them more invested in caring for the trees they choose.

ನನ್ನ ನಗರ! ನನ್ನ ಹೆಮ್ಮೆ! ನನ್ನ ಜವಾಬ್ದಾರಿ! **My City! My Pride! My Responsibility!**

info@nammabnp.org   nammabnp.org   +91 80 4719 0000   fb.com/nammabnp   @nammabnp