

Metrolife on the move

Comfort yourself during your periods with these goodies P4 ➤



HEAR HEAR The All India Radio station on Raj Bhavan Road.

Eco serial on AIR in 19 languages

A 52-episode series covers global warming, climate change and a host of other environmental problems

All India Radio (AIR) along with Vigyan Prasar, Department of Science and Technology and Karnataka State Council for Science and Technology has been broadcasting 'Bhoorameya Bisiyusuru' for the past 10 years, in its attempt to popularise science. The serial focuses on various subjects related to environment and the earth.



Sumangala S Mummigatti, programme executive

Kannada timings

Every Sunday - 8.35 am to 9.05 am (612 KHz)

It is a 52 episode programme broadcasted for 30 minutes every Sunday from 8.35 am to 9.05 am. The programme is aired in 19 languages across India.

"Every year we choose a subject related to planet earth. This year, our focus is on climate change and global warming. Though it's widely spoken about, people are still confused if it is actually taking place. So, AIR decided to give in-depth information on this and how a common man can influence and get affected by global warming and climate change," says Sumangala S Mummigatti, programme executive, All India Radio (AIR), Bengaluru.

The concept of the radio serial is planned in a way that the programme can be addressed to and understood by a layman, she says. As of now, only two episodes have been aired.

"Every eighth episode is an interactive session. We encourage our listeners to write letters to us about anything unusual that they have observed in their ge-

ographical area," explains Sumangala.

Explaining the difference between climate and weather was one of the most important topics they touched upon.

"A lot of people still confuse the two words and use them interchangeably, especially in Kannada, where the words haavama (climate) and haavaguna (weather) sound similar. This doubt was resolved in the second episode," she adds.

Sumangala, who is the producer of the programme, is also a scriptwriter for it. Some of the other scriptwriters are Y C Kamala, G V Nirmala and N Gopala Krishna. She says that the team gets as many experts as possible to be part of the show like Nagesh Hegde, T R Ananta Rami and Venkata Swamy and T V Ramachandra.

"Our main aim is to get

our listeners to participate. For our earlier editions, we have received a lot of positive responses in the form of letters, including some in braille. Our listeners can participate by answering the questions asked at the end of every episode and win prizes," says Sumangala.

So, how important is it to have a programme that educates people of all ages about the earth and the environment?

"People use the luxuries and facilities given to them by science but hardly do they understand the impact it has on the environment. This radio serial makes an attempt to educate people about these underlying implications and why everything should be used mindfully," adds Sumangala.

Every November or December, producers of all 19 language formats and a nodal officer meet for a brainstorming session. Here, they decide on a subject for the year and plan the content of each episode. Every language follows the same content but in their own format.

Talking about their plans, Sumangala says she and her team wants to capture real-life experiences. This, she says, will help in understanding the impact of human activities on the environment.

"I would like to see more participation from youngsters this year," adds Sumangala. **Surupasree Sarmmah**

Steel bridge battle won, war not over

Campaigners want a public consultation before any work begins on the 102-km elevated corridor

After the recent scrapping of the steel flyover from Hebbal to Chalukya Circle by the High Court, the focus falls back on the elevated corridor, a 102-km project which is on hold.

When '#ElevatorCorridorBeda' was trending online, it created much uproar and the project was put on hold during the Lok Sabha elections.

Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy had assured citizen groups that there would be a public consultation done for the project.

Citizen groups have now moved the National Green Tribunal (NGT) for the cancellation of the environmental clearance given to the project last week, and are pushing hard for a public consultation.

Tara Krishnaswamy, co-founder of Citizens for Bengaluru (CFB), says that the collective is waiting for a response from the chief minister before taking any action.

"We have filed a case against the KRDC; they announced that they will be building the elevated corridor, even while the project was put on hold. In the meantime, we are working on a consolidated report of the Social Impact Assessment that we worked on," she says.

The worst part is that 90 per cent of citizens who will be affected by Phase I of the project were not aware of such a project.

"The project is so well hidden; while many might have heard about the corridor coming up, most do not know that it could be right



The elevated corridor project faced protests and was put on hold. A majority of people who will be affected by the project are not aware of how exactly it will impact them, say activists, as they seek proper documentation.



Tara Krishnaswamy, Citizens for Bengaluru.

Imagine dug-up roads, rubble and pollution for more than 10 years with such a project

Tara Krishnaswamy Co-founder, CFB

outside their establishments or homes. While a public consultation gives space to all responses, if all documentation connected to the project is made public, we believe that it will face stiff opposition."

Ramps on the elevated corridor do not sound clear and many such details of the project need more clarity, she says. "For many places like Adugodi, Double Road,



Leo Saldana, Environment Support Group

Ulsoor, houses and buildings would have to be eliminated. The canopy would be affected deeply too."

Tara adds, "In Bengaluru, the smallest flyover takes around five years to complete. Imagine dug up roads, rubble and the pollution for more than 10 years with such a project?"

The same principles of the steel flyover -- form, function and legality -- apply to the elevated corridor, points out Leo Saldana, full-time coordinator, Environment Support Group.

"The elevated corridor should also be abandoned for the same reasons that the steel flyover was for. A memorandum has been sent to the Chief Minister to remind him about the public consultation for the project that was assured after the elections were done."

The public feels the urge to approach the High Court when the State doesn't listen to their concerns, he says.

"This proves how the State and civic agencies do not include the public in decision-making. Yesterday it was steel project, today it's concrete, tomorrow might be of gold and this needs to be monitored. It's not a few crores which come into account, the future of the city is in jeopardy with this project. Bureaucrats and officials who do not care for public opinion should step away from their positions," he says.

Leo points out that interactive sessions are happening in the city in connection to the elevated corridor.

"What is the whole point of setting up new projects while destroying the city?" **Tini Sara Anien**

Plastic packaging still rampant

But happily, some shops are putting in the extra effort to use paper instead

The menace of plastic continues to haunt Bengaluru. While the government has banned plastic bags and cutlery, plastic packaging continues to be a major contributor to the city's overflowing landfills.

Sample this: one hair clip or a bunch of simple hair bands come covered in their own plastic packets.

These are too small and flimsy to be used again and are thrown away once customers take them home.

A shop stocks hundreds of these; and you find dozens of such shops on any busy street in Bengaluru.

Metrolife asked owners of shops, both big and small, on Brigade Road about the menace of plastic packaging and this is what they had to say.

Ilahui (Korean lifestyle store) "The products we get from abroad come in plastic packaging but we remove the covers of some of them, like hair bands, when we display them. So some are covered and some are not. But we can't make any policy changes as the packaging decisions depend on companies abroad," says Bajrang, in charge of the counter.



Stores continue to sell their products in plastic covering, which goes against the government's vision of a plastic-free Bengaluru. (Above) Products on display at Ilahui.

Mr Button (Men's fashion clothing shop)

"We are against plastic but we can't ask the suppliers to stop using polythene to cover their products. This is very affordable; a polybag costs only about a rupee. All

other alternatives are either not viable on a large scale or are too costly; it might cost Rs 5-6 to cover just one item. So after we receive these items, we remove the covering and throw it away," says Siddiq Bain, manager.



Plastic is liberally used in the packaging of many items, including those sold at the Miniso store on Brigade Road.

Rusmi (Bridal jewellery store)

"Plastic covering is important for our products, which are valuable and fragile. They come from outside the state and need to be covered properly and plastic boxes do a good job.

Homegrown shows the way

"We always use paper carry bags even though they are quite expensive. Sometimes we have to pay more than Rs 30-40 a bag, which might be more than the value of the product we are giving out; even then we're ready to hand out multiple bags," says Siddiq Bain, manager of menswear shop, Mr Button.

Small shops do their bit, while retail giants flout rules

When Christma Anyanya walked into Japanese retail brand Miniso's store on Brigade Road last week, she was not prepared for the sight that met her eyes.

At the billing counter, she was handed large, single-use plastic bags to carry her shopping. Christma, a student of environmental science at Mount Carmel College, asked the shop why they were using plastic, and the sales people said they had run out of paper bags.

"We asked if they could give us some paper to wrap it with, but they didn't have any. We then talked to the management there, who asked us to leave if it bothered us," she fumes.

Christma says if vegetable vendors and small shop owners can buy pa-



Christma protested when handed a plastic cover.

per bags, how can a retail giant like Miniso, which reported an all-India revenue of Rs 700 crore for 2017-18 (their first year of operation) say they have run out of paper bags?

When Metrolife went to the store, employees said they did use paper carry bags but had run out of them on that particular day.



A click by Christma (above) of the single-use plastic bags being handed out to Miniso customers last week.