

Overly concrete Bengaluru is the reason behind record number of uprooted trees | Bengaluru News - Times of India

Vinay Lokesh | May 30, 2020, 00:00 IST
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Every time it rains, the immediate thoughts in any Bengalurean's mind are waterlogging, fallen trees and related damage and power cuts. Well, maybe not in that exact order, but there is no denying that falling trees are a big worry, what with over 150 having been uprooted in different parts of the city due to heavy pre-monsoon rain and gusty winds in May alone. With the monsoon almost upon us and the Meteorological Department predicting more rains, environmentalists are concerned about road side trees, many of which may get uprooted considering that the [concrete](#) around them has left no space for [water penetration](#) or aeration to the trees.

'Bengaluru is 81% concrete, which is bad for trees'

In an earlier interaction with Bangalore Times, Prof TV Ramachandra, Head of Centre for Ecological Science, Indian Institute of Science, had said, “In 1973, 59% of Bengaluru was green, while only 7% was concrete structures. Today, 81% of the land is concrete structures, which leaves little scope for water percolation after a good rain.”

‘Trees fall because they have no breathing space’

Tree doctor Vijay Nishanth explains, “When there is not enough space for roots, they rot, which, ultimately weakens the trees. For instance, on [Lalbagh Road](#), trees are still healthy because they have enough breathing space.”

Environmentalist Vasanthkumar Mysoremath adds, “The rules of Indian Road Congress are never followed by road construction authorities. Trees need sink pits around their base, not hot bitumen or concrete.”

Experts want [Gulmohar](#), officials differ

Officials in Bengaluru and Mysuru have said that softwood trees like the Gulmohar are a hazard and that they would not plant newer saplings. “You need trees like Gulmohar to beautify the city. Yes, they are prone to get uprooted, but that doesn’t mean they need to be chopped. Regular pruning and more space for them to grow should solve the problem,” says Vijay.