Home › Cities › Bengaluru

Under Cubbon Park canopy, citizens gather for trees

By K Shriya Sharma | Express News Service | Published: 05th June 2017 05:44 AM |
Last Updated: 05th June 2017 05:44 AM | **A+ A A-** | 🖶

Participants inhaling unpolluted air with oxygen bar.

BENGALURU: Hundreds of citizens of Bengaluru along with members of few NGOs assembled under the trees at Cubbon Park for 'Mara Habba', an event organised by Jhatkaa to get Bengalureans to understand the dangers that come with the depletion of tree cover in the city.

Children writing messages on trees | Pushkar V

Jhatkaa has been campaigning for Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Pallike to set up the promised and much-awaited greening committees to monitor the felling of trees in the city.

They say that they see little initiative from BBMP to set up these committees, despite giving their word in front of the High Court back in 2014 that they would, and so have taken it themselves to save our trees.

The Mara Habba held on Saturday was also attended by experts such as Dr TV Ramachandran, IISc, Harini Nagendra, professor of sustainability at Aziz Premji University and Vijay Nishant, a tree expert, who delivered talks to the citizens. Among them was also actress/singer/environment activist Vasundhara Das who said that we don't have the luxury of losing tree cover in the city, and that there are other ways to accomodate Bengaluru's growing population and progress.

Bar for clean oxygen

Citizens were also shown how to identify trees, and how to plant and take care of saplings. An oxygen bar was set up, where people could inhale unpolluted oxygen, and air quality monitors were also available so that people could see the pollution levels around them. Krishnan, a project manager, had come to the event along with his daughters, said, "We pride ourselves for being called the 'garden city', so we ought to do something to keep that reputation up. Events like this are a good start in getting people to see how the tree cover in the city is being lost."

"We have lost 88 per cent vegetation and 79 per cent water bodies - the city has become a concrete jungle," said Ramachandran. "By 2020, 94 per cent of Bengaluru will be filled with concrete, and we won't have any clean air to breathe. We should ideally have 7 trees for one person, but instead, we have 7 people for one tree - that's the ratio." He added, citizens need to get together and question the system, as that's the only way we can come up with a solution.