

GREENS WANT PROTECTION OF FOREST ACROSS KARNATAKA

By Deepthi Sanjiv, Bangalore Mirror Bureau | Jan 30, 2017, 04.00 AM IST

Students under the National Environment Care Federation (NECF) have presented a memorandum to the forest department seeking protection of forests across Karnataka. The NECF has extended support to the people of Gadag who are fighting to protect the Kappatagudda forest which is facing a serious threat from the illegal mining lobby.



Students, who formed a human chain, spoke about the importance of protecting water resources

It is learnt that a public consultative meeting was recently held in Gadag. Meanwhile, the students who formed a human chain on Saturday and spoke about the importance of protecting water resources, urged the state government to protect the Western Ghats and drop the proposed new road connecting Byrapura in Chikkamagaluru with Shishila in Dakshina Kannada – suspected to be at the insistence of several resorts and homestays in the region.

Dinesh Holla, coordinator Sahyadri Sanchaya, a registered group of green activists spearheading a campaign against Yettinahole diversion project, while speaking to Bangalore Mirror alleged that the government had a hidden agenda as there was more to it than merely providing a road connectivity to villages, especially at the cost of thousands of trees.

He said the government had several options. There is already an Bisle Ghat road that can be developed. “Although the government refused to come on record, they are well aware that the study conducted by scientists led by Prof TV Ramachandra was correct and it is likely that they will not get sufficient water in Yettinahole to be sent to the parched districts. Hence the idea could be to draw water from the rivers Kumaradhara and Kapila,” he said.

A study by Ramachandra, Vinay S and Bharath H Aithal from the Energy and Wetlands Research Group, Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, on environmental flow assessment in Yettinahole, states that the Yettinahole catchments received annual rainfall of 3,000–4,500 mm. The total runoff yield from the catchments is estimated to be 9.55 TMC (thousand million cubic) in contrast to the estimated 24 TMC in the detailed Project report (DPR) prepared by Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited (KNNL), or 22

TMC as per the Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL).

Holla said, "Secondly there is a huge mafia of resorts and home stays, who want a road to be constructed. Shishila is one of the few places left that has been protected so far; and finally, this is just the foundation for the implementation of the Paramashivaiah report that suggested utilizing water from Western Ghats streams flowing into the Arabian Sea to irrigate parched districts," he said.