

- [Home \(/\)](#)
- [Nation \(/nation\)](#)
- [World \(/world\)](#)
- [South \(/south\)](#)
- [Entertainment \(/entertainment\)](#)
- [Sports \(/sports\)](#)
- [Technology \(/technology\)](#)
- [Lifestyle \(/lifestyle\)](#)
- [Videos \(/videos\)](#)
- [Gallery \(/galleries\)](#)
- [Business \(/business\)](#)
- [More... ▾](#)

NATION (/NATION), CURRENT AFFAIRS (/NATION/CURRENT-AFFAIRS)

Bengaluru government axes plan to amend tree Act

DECCAN CHRONICLE.

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The State government on Wednesday withdrew the controversial proposed amendment to the Karnataka Tree Preservation Act (1976).



📷 The amendment, which was introduced earlier exempted permission for chopping around 50 species of trees without permission of land holder/farmer or public consultation, which had raised concerns among the environmentalists.

BENGALURU: The State government on Wednesday withdrew the controversial proposed amendment to the Karnataka Tree Preservation Act (1976). The amendment, which was introduced earlier exempted permission for chopping around 50 species of trees without permission of land holder/farmer or public consultation, which had raised concerns among the environmentalists. The move to amend the bill had invited lot of criticism from citizens and other environmental organisations. Earlier today, a public campaign “Save Trees and Protest KTP amendment” was launched by Vijay Nishanth, urban ecologist and tree conservationist, Akshay Heblikar, Environmentalist and Director of Eco Watch, M.F. Saldhana, former judge of Karnataka and Maharashtra, Narendra, environmental activist, Prakash Belawadi, activist and actor, Devre, environment support group and other environmental organisations to oppose the amendment.

The 50 species of trees proposed for de-notification included Simarouba, Albizia Lebbeck, African tulip and other varieties, which have medicinal and environmental value.

Initiating the campaign, Vijay Nishanth said, "Despite IISc and the research committee clearly stating that the amendment was not feasible, why is the government so adamant."

Several environmentalists and citizens from Coorg, Mysuru, Mangaluru and North Karnataka had also joined the campaign.

A campaign 'Say no to the KTP Act' had received more than 40,000 calls within 18 hours. Saldhana said, "This is the worst atrocity. The law was made to protect the tress and now the government is changing it to cut them."

He also highlighted the neglect of article 51 (a) of Indian Constitution which clearly states, 'It shall be the duty of citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures.' After the government withdrew the proposed amendment, Nishanth said, "The government should start involving the experts and local environmentalist from now. They can't just take people and environment for granted."

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