

Published: November 18, 2009 09:40 IST | Updated: November 18, 2009 13:42 IST

'I own a tree' campaign to save Bangalore's greenery

IANS



A view of the Cubbon Park in Bangalore. File Photo: K. Murali Kumar

The Hindu

A silent “green revolution” is in the making in India’s tech hub Bangalore as citizens come together to sponsor trees to save the city’s “green heritage” which has of late come under threat owing to development activities.

The unique programme christened “I Own a Tree”, started by Bangalore-based environment group Eco Club, allows a person to sponsor and own a tree for two years.

So far 300 Bangaloreans and a few corporate houses, including Nokia, have come together to plant around 4,000 trees in various parts of the city -- such as Bangalore University (BU) Jnanabharati campus, Bannerghata Road, and the Kanakpura area. The plantation drive was started six months ago.

Chiddalinga Prasad, one of the founder members of Eco Club, told IANS: “The concept of sponsoring of trees by Bangaloreans is to connect people with the trees by establishing a special emotional bond through ownership.”

The programme allows a person to sponsor and own a tree for two years by paying Rs.365.

“During the first two years of the sapling’s life, Eco Club will take care of the sponsored tree. The sponsor can come and visit the tree whenever he wishes. One can also volunteer and help in planting saplings,” informed Prasad.

Eco Club is a joint green initiative by the voluntary organisations Kshiti Foundation and Rotary Midtown. Its members plan to plant around 100,000 trees in Bangalore every year.

Bangaloreans who are part of the plantation drive have been issued a special sticker which says “I OWN A TREE”.

“The sticker can be proudly displayed on vehicles, homes, offices, etc. Individuals will be provided with complete information about the type of the tree planted in his/her name and all necessary education required for caring and nurturing the tree they own,” said Prasad.

Those who are interested to become a part of “I own a tree” movement can log on to www.iownatree.org.

Raman Singh, an IT professional who has sponsored a tree, said that now he cares more about the environment.

“The concept of ‘I own a tree’ has been designed to bring in the much-needed bonding of people with the environment. I am a proud owner of a tree and am trying my level best to save Bangalore’s lost green heritage,” said Singh.

Bhaskar G.S., chairman of Eco Club, said that the club would not be complaining about trees being uprooted in the name of infrastructure, but instead will go on planting more trees around the city. “For each uprooted tree, we will plant 10 trees,” he said.

In the past two to three years alone, Bangalore has lost around 50,000 trees, states a report of the Environment Support Group (ESG), a Bangalore-based NGO and part of Hasiru Usiru (Greenery is Life), a conglomeration of community organisations.

Hasiru Usiru has been at the forefront to protest the “illogical destruction” of Bangalore’s greenery for developmental works.

Construction for the upcoming metro rail in central Bangalore has recently led to the uprooting of 279 trees near the legislative assembly building, Vidhana Soudha, and the Central College Road.

Keywords: [I own a tree](#), [campaign](#), [Bangalore](#), [greenery](#), [citizens](#), [green heritage](#), [sponsor trees](#), [Eco Club](#)

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