

***NAMMA RASTE! NAMMA OORU! HASIRE USIRU!***

## **Join the Campaign to Reclaim our City**

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2008, 5-7 pm**

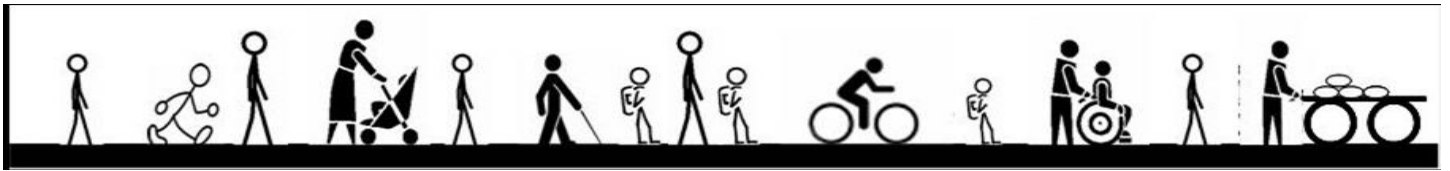
**Town Hall, J. C. Road, Bangalore**

### ***Road widening and Metro projects are being aggressively promoted as solutions to traffic congestion by our authorities***

- Hundreds of trees are being felled to widen roads and at least 40,000 old and charming avenue trees will be felled if the 91 identified roads running to a length of 400 kms. are widened. BBMP plans to widen 500 roads next!
- Road widening will destroy hundreds of homes and businesses and cause irreparable hardship for thousands across Bangalore. Affected families, businesses and property owners will not be compensated. Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) merely proposes to give them Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) - a piece of paper that has no market value presently!
- Thousands of street vendors across the city will have no space to trade, thus losing their only means of livelihood. Their Right to Life and Livelihood is thus being denied.
- The elderly, children, cyclists and the differently abled will be the worst sufferers as road widening will make even crossing roads a high risk activity. Many have already suffered the worst as a result of poor road design. Bellary Road which was widened to give connectivity to the new airport kills one person every other day and tens are injured, most of them critically.
- Road widening projects are illegal. They are in blatant violation of the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, Karnataka Municipal Corporation Act, and various other legislations. Tree felling consequent to the current road widening programmes are in violation of Karnataka Tree Preservation Act.
- The Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka ordered in WP No. 7107/2008 (PIL) that road widening and such other transport projects must comply with all provisions of law. An Empowered Committee was set up to ensure that projects were promoted in consultation with the public, were lawful and sustainable from the social, economic and environmental perspectives.
- The Empowered Committee has not approved a single road widening project since it was constituted in June 2008. Yet, in blatant violation of the Hon'ble Court's orders, officials of the BBMP and Forest officials have been cutting hundreds of trees, removing pavements and widening roads.
- Today, hundreds of homeowners, businessmen and street vendors live in the fear of being displaced.

### **And after all this destruction, widening roads will simply not improve traffic congestion. This is why.**

- Poor traffic management and bad design of intersections significantly contribute to traffic congestion. Look around and you will notice that traffic is clogged mainly at intersections.
- Unless we attend to these problems, no amount of road widening will help solve the problem of traffic congestion.



## Are there Solutions that do not involve widening roads? INDEED YES!

- Intelligent road designs with low financial and infrastructure investment can provide immense benefits. Scientifically managing traffic signals all across Bangalore (and not just M. G. Road) and improving the design of our intersections will reduce congestion quite a bit. In addition, if we can ensure disciplined and safe driving, there will be even more reduction in traffic congestion.
- Bangalore is ideally suited for cycling ribbons (biking pathways) crisscrossing the city. WE NEED SAFE CYCLING AND WALKING CORRIDORS ON EVERY STREET NOW! This can be achieved on our existing road space with our charming avenue trees working as protective barriers. Imagine cycling to a bus stand!
- More people walking or cycling = Less people driving Cars and Bikes = Reduction in traffic congestion.
- Thousands must abandon their cars and motorbikes – the main cause for congestion. To help them make this choice, we need an effective public transport system NOW – not ten years from now!

## The best, quickest, and cheapest solution to our public transport problem is to simply add more buses.

- BMTC is doing a remarkable job already. It's 5,000 buses move 37 lakhs of people every day (about half the city's population) even when they constitute only 0.3% of the 30 lakhs vehicles in our city!
- Our bus fleet can be doubled for only Rs. 600 crores. Once done, BMTC can potentially carry anyone from anywhere to anywhere else anywhere in Bangalore. Our need to drive daily will simply disappear.
- More buses = Less need to drive = Less Traffic = More safe space on our roads.
- **Children can cycle once again to school and elderly folks can walk without fear.**

## But 'Namma Metro' will solve our traffic problem. Right?

- **Wrong!** The present design of the Metro will cater to only 10% of Bangalore's traveling population, but cost a whopping Rs. 9,000 crores (at current costs). Poor will not be able to afford the Metro.
- Bangalore Metro (not yet *Namma Metro*) is to be built on elevated tracks. As a result our congested streets will be further congested. The Metro will also eat into our parks such as Lal Bagh, Lakshman Rao Park (the best boulevard in any Indian city) and K. R. Road park (already destroyed). Metro stations proposed in these parks will also have Malls. More parking space! Less park space!
- Building an underground Metro will not only save the present Bangalore, but also give it a strong future. All that the Government needs to do is invest in an underground Metro and stop wastefully investing in High Speed Rail Links for air travelers (a bus systems is far cheaper) and Elevated Roads for the elite.
- Metro systems are successful only when they work with other public transport modes, like buses. Thus, a good bus system is anyway required to make any Metro successful.

**If we don't act now on such straightforward solutions, then with 1,500 new vehicles added every day to Bangalore's roads, traffic will double in less than five years.**

***Very soon, all widened roads will have to be widened once again!***

*More homes and business destroyed.*

*Thousands of Livelihoods Destroyed.*

*Bangalore's Greenery will be History.*

**ACT NOW TO RECLAIM YOUR CITY. COME WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES TO THE CAMPAIGN TO RECLAIM YOUR BENGALURU!**

Initiative of **Hasire Usiru** – a progressive network of individuals and organisations to protect public and social spaces

Confirm your participation. Call Environment Support Group [esg@esgindia.org](mailto:esg@esgindia.org) . [www.esgindia.org](http://www.esgindia.org)

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