

Environment Support Group ®

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UCP

Shri. Montek Singh Ahluwalia
Dy Chairman
Planning Commission
Yojana Bhavan
Sansad Marg, New Delhi -110 001

20 March 2008

Reg.: Road widening schemes of Bangalore and request to look into its impacts urgently

Dear Mr Ahluwalia,

Environment Support Group (ESG) is a registered non-for-profit public interest research, training, campaign and advocacy initiative working on a variety of social and environmental justice issues. An important aspect of its work has been related to urban planning issues. Over the past three years it has been instrumental in building a network of concerned citizens, community organisations and NGOs called '*Hasiru Usiru*'. The mandate of the network is to primarily work together in protecting Bangalore's greenery, forest tracts and public spaces and also help to evolve socially and ecologically sensitive rationales for urban planning and development.

We have been deeply concerned by the irrational approaches to road widening that are being pursued by Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). In this regard, from time to time we have met different authorities to put forth our concerns and also discuss viable alternatives. However, the authorities seem to be convinced about their irrational road widening plans, which will only prove to be counterproductive in the long run.

We are herewith enclosing a copy of a detailed representation we have made to Mr. Gaurav Gupta, Commissioner, Karnataka Urban Land Transport Department in this regard, and which is self-explanatory. We request you to intervene and stop the ongoing road widening proposals as they will destroy the character of Bangalore besides making road use unsafe for pedestrians and vehicle movement. In addition, these schemes have a significant adverse impact on the life and livelihoods of residents and businesses, which has not been considered at all.

As part of *Hasiru Usiru* we have repeatedly requested the government and its agencies to involve us in such decisions as per the High Court judgment (attached as annexure), so that the outcomes are positive and progressive. In this regard we request you to guide BBMP and other authorities to involve us in such decisions.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

Leo F. Saldanha
Coordinator

Divya Ravindranath
Research Associate

Environment Support Group

