

Blooming trees in Hyderabad takes edge off COVID-19 lockdown blues

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Queen's crepe-myrtle or the Pride of India in full bloom during the sweltering summer at Necklace Road | S Senbagapandiyan

HYDERABAD: While Hyderabad is locked down and most residents are confined to their homes amid the Coronavirus pandemic, seasonal flowers are blooming in abandon. According to urban forestry experts, a majority of the seasonal flowering trees on the city roads were planted 15 years ago as part of a large plantation drive akin to the Haritha Haram now.

Gulmohar trees, popularly known as 'Flame of the Forest' and *Peltophorum pterocarpum*, commonly known as Copperpod trees and Queen's crepe-myrtle or the Pride of India are in full bloom this sweltering summer.

The road that runs through the underside of Masab Tank flyover is now carpeted with scented flowers of the season. It is a visual delight even for people who are driving on the Masab Tank flyover for the branches of the trees go beyond the railing of the flyover.

The busy Road No.1, Banjara Hills, is lined with different shades of Pride of India trees which are in full bloom. A majority of these trees were planted collectively by the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) or then Hyderabad Urban Development Authority (HUDA), 15 years ago," B Sreenivas, Deputy Conservator of Forests and Director of Urban Forestry says. "Most of these avenue trees provide shade regardless of seasons and bloom once a year."

Breathtaking landscape

"It is indeed a delight to watch the seasonal trees blossom. Flowers are a sign of hope," says Divya, a student of Botany who likes identifying the various flowers in the city. "This year I could not tour the city to experience the seasonal blooms which are going to fade soon. But I was able to gaze through the window at a 'Golden shower tree' which is in full bloom," says Divya who is a resident of Bandlaguda.

SEASONAL BOUNTY

A majority of the seasonal trees that line the roads of Hyderabad were planted 15 years ago. The plantation drive at the time was similar to the Haritha Haram today. The vivid colours of the flowers are a sight for sore eyes despite the lockdown causing gloom among many citizens

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