

BANGALORE SOUTH DARK AGAIN

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Unscheduled power cuts continue to affect South Bangaloreans. On Wednesday, residents of Jayanagar, J P Nagar and Kanakapura Road were left high and dry for long hours.

Mukund N, a resident of Jayanagar 4 T Block, said there were power interruptions on Tuesday five to six times in just one hour. There is some problem in the grid. Sometimes it is for 15 minutes, sometimes for over half an hour. There is erratic supply throughout the city.

A senior Bescom official interruptions at Somanahalli KPTC line were leading to power outages in South Bangalore.

ON FRIDAY...

There are more power cuts in store on Friday from 10am to 2pm because of quarterly maintenance work. Affected areas are: Kadugodi, Samedanahalli, Muthsandra, Yamandanahalli, Belikere, Kottur, Harohalli, T S Halli Cross, Channasandra, Whitefield, Maiti Layout, Thimmashettyhalli, Bodhanahosahalli, Devalapura, Sai Layout, Naduvathi, Devanagudi, Dinnur, Varthur, Borewell Road, Immidihalli, Nagondanahalli, Gunjur, Kumbena Agrahara, part of Hoskote limits, Patalamma Extension, Belathur Colony, Siddhartha Layout, Hagdur, Mother Dairy, Gandipura, Vijaynagar, Ambedkar Layout, ITPL Road, Brigade Tech Park and surrounding areas.

Veggie vendors bank on PRIVATE POWER

K. Suresh Prasad



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Sunitha Rao R | TNM

Bangalore: The kindly lights that shine down on the Malleswaram vegetable market are the solar types, and vendors who can't afford them opt for battery-operated lamps. The traders of 9th Cross, East Park Road, have to bank on these alternative sources of power supply simply because their market is denied this basic facility. So for four hours after sundown, they switch on their private power.

There is not a new market, but one of the most popular ones of Old Bangalore, housed in a old stone structure built on an acre of space. But till today, there is no electricity or water supply here, leave alone toilet facilities. Five vendors who operate inside the congested market depend on solar energy. "I

have spent about Rs 20,000 for two lights and a battery that runs on solar energy. During the monsoon and winter, we are hit by a lack of sufficient sunlight as solar batteries are not easily charged. But there is absolutely no problem in summer," says V Saraswathi, a vegetable vendor who has been using solar lamps for more than

OUT OF THE BOX

two-and-half years. Like her, there were more than 20 vendors who depended on solar lamps, but many left due to lack of facilities.

The ones who operate from the open market use battery-operated lights. Ramesh Babu is one among the 115 traders who does so. "We only have some dim streetlights at the open

market. There is no electricity supply inside the market, so we depend on battery lights," says Babu, who has spent about Rs 6,500 on the lighting system.

NO CHANCE OF FACELIFT

The minute the traders ask BBMP to improve conditions at the market, they are asked to vacate. "We have made many pleas to officials. Each time we ask, they tell us we must move to Malleswaram 13th Cross market. That market is already overcrowded, and if we shift there, we'll suffer losses," says A Nagarathna, a vegetable vendor who uses solar lights.

The traders have also pleaded with the BBMP for licenses, but in vain. "We are not street vendors. This is an old market, and as per the rulebook, vendors of such markets need not vacate. BBMP has not bothered to improve our condition nor give us licenses. Though many malls have been given space in Malleswaram, the government has neglected us. We have no electricity supply at all. When K Jairaj was BBMP commissioner, he considered our pleas. But nothing much happened after that," says B Krishnamurthy, general secretary of the Traders' Association of the market.

UNLIKE THE ORDINARY: Till today, there is neither water supply nor electricity in Malleswaram market

St Joseph's College turns into a powerhouse

Arun Dev | TNM

Bangalore: As the summer sun beats down on the city, the solar panels fitted on the roof of St Joseph's College of Arts and Science, on Langford Road, will soak in the energy to produce electricity for the institution.

In a pioneering venture, the city college is setting up its own solar power plant, which will begin operating starting April 18.

The 129-year-old college, whose Bescom bill runs up to Rs 1 lakh every month, will not only be saving electricity but also be self-sufficient. Besides, it has promised the government that it will

supply electricity produced during the college vacation, for public consumption.

The college authorities announced the landmark project during the visit of home secretary of India GK Pillai, on Monday. "The problem of electricity and water shortage are often discussed in academics, and we are aware of the need for conservation. We decided to do something about it," said Fr Ambrose Pinto, principal, St Joseph's College.

More than 400 panels will be installed to produce 100 kiloWatt of power. According to college officials, this power will be sufficient to run all the science and computer labs in the college, which require a large amount of electricity.

College officials said that after inauguration of the project on April 18, the process of power-sharing would be discussed with Bescom.

The cost of setting up the project is approximately Rs 1.6 crore, however, a subsidy of Rs 60 lakh is being provided by the Centre. The college is expecting a subsidy from the state government too.

"It is not about the money, though. Monetarily, it is a huge investment for a college, but about doing what you preach. If we can teach students about the need to conserve energy for the future, we should be able to show them that we can do it. It's about the values we pass on to the next generation," said Fr Pinto.

THEY HARVEST RAINWATER TOO

Apart from solar energy, the college has adopted rainwater harvesting to recharge its ground water reserves. Water harvesting was taken up on a large scale by the college after its borewell ran dry a year ago. According to Fr Ambrose Pinto, the water harvesting system was installed to make sure that rainwater was made full use of. Students of the National Service Scheme of the college are now working on providing blogs for the science labs.