

Silicon Valley turns E-Friendly

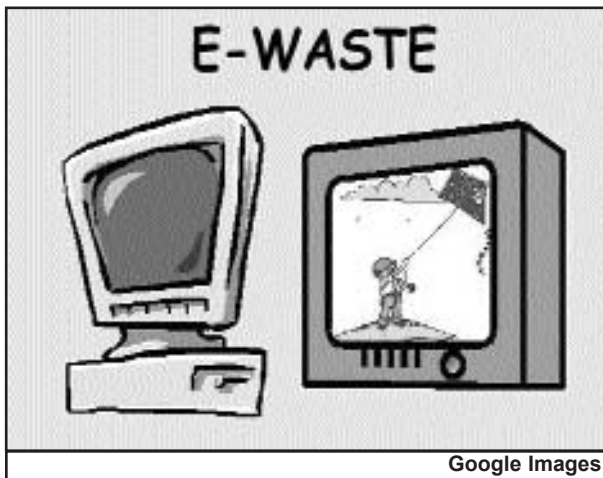
KPTCL to come up with e-waste recycling plants

SHARATH N. MURTHY
Bangalore, Oct 24: The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) is taking steps to reduce the environmental and health hazards from e-wastes. E-wastes are the electrical or electronic wastes like used floppy disks, CDs, keyboards and other computer equipments. Used wires, cables and used batteries are also considered as e-wastes.

Lakshmi Kantha H, Assistant Environmental Officer, said that the KSPCB has identified plots and are in the process of acquiring them to start e-waste recycling plants. He said the main highlights of these plants would be that, none of these would use fuel like diesel, petrol, coal, electricity, heavy machineries, etc. "It is zero energy consuming process", he added. These plants will employ people from the lower strata of the society and widows.

In the process of recycling of e-wastes the employees dismantle the e-wastes and see how much of

the waste can be reused. The waste



Lakshmi Kantha further adds that recycling of e-wastes has tremendous potential in terms of growth economy. About 10 to 15 metric tonnes of e-waste is produced per year in Karnataka, Bangalore adding the most for it. Many companies have come forward to support the KSPCB in this venture. There are already three recycling centers in East, North and Central Bangalore.

Collection centers:
* The Forum Mall, Koramangala
* GK Vale on MG Road, Jayanagar and Indiranagar
* Fabmall in Indiranagar, Bannerghatta Road and Safina Plaza
* Fitness One in Jayanagar and Koramangala.

Wilma Rodrigues of Saahas- an initiative for solid waste management says that they have public collection points across various parts of the city. These include shopping malls, I.T industries, and educational institutions. People can drop in their e-waste in the drop-boxes. They collect 100kgs of e waste every month. Later, this is handed over to E-Parisaraa Pvt. Ltd., which is an authorized E-waste recycling agency. These e-wastes are then processed and recycled.

parts like a keyboard are dismantled and the components that can be reused are sent back to the manufacturers.

Malls neglecting disabled

Public places not having sufficient facilities

AYESHA ALEEM

Bangalore, Oct 24: Several malls in Bangalore are not disabled-friendly. According to the Building Bye-Laws, 2003 as laid down by the Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, all public and semi-public buildings are obliged to provide certain basic amenities for the benefit of disabled patrons. A survey of shopping malls in the city showed that several facilities like ramps, railings and clear signboards do not exist in their premises. This makes disabled people dependent on others.

Interestingly, it was found that while most of the malls did possess some of the required facilities, none of them had all, which ultimately made complete accessibility impossible.

For instance, Garuda Mall at the intersection of Magarath and Commissariat Road in the city, is based on two levels - one level that begins from the road and a series of steps creating the next that lead into the shopping mall. A ramp for wheelchair access, at only one of two entrances, begins from the second level only. Wheelchair access from the pavement is not

available.

Personnel of the marketing divisions of the mall informed that this problem is overcome by bringing the disabled patron into the mall using the ramps in the parking lot. The mall has bathrooms for the disabled on every floor. However, it was noticed that fully capable maintenance staff was using this facility. Lifts are provided on every floor to escort those in wheelchairs to the other floors, but Garuda Mall has had at least three elevator-related mishaps, since its recent inception in 2003.

Only Eva Mall has parking and washrooms facilities especially for the disabled as well as accessibility at the main entrance, with anti-slip features. However, its bathroom lacks the rails necessary to assist a disabled user and its washbasins are not in accordance with their requirements.

Raj Kumar, a graphic designer of the Association for People with Disability, who is a disabled person said that he was not satisfied with the facilities provided at public places. "I think the malls don't have for us", he said.

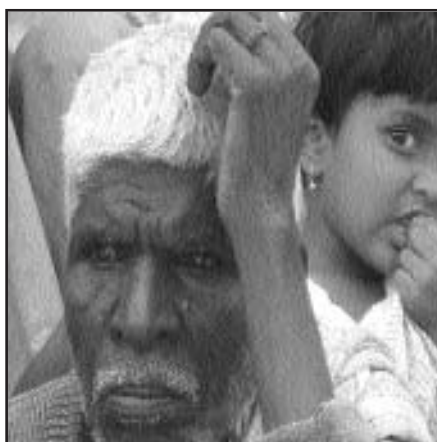
Fight for right: age no bar

Senior Citizens of slums protest against the irregular pension plans

ADITI SONI

Bangalore, Oct 24: Senior Citizens living in slum areas are demanding a change in the existing old age pension schemes. In the recent protest taken out near the Town Hall, they put forward all their

demands including fulfillment of very basic needs like the issues of Below Poverty Line, ration cards, concession in public buses, to name a few. But their focus remained



An old man sitting amongst the protester in front of the Town Hall
Pic by author

physical handicap. "Once people get themselves registered with the Tehsildar of their respective areas, there is no point of not sanctioning the pension to them" said Nazeerpeeran, dealing with old age pensions.

But 'Aikyata', a federation of Senior Citizens living in slums, believes that government policies are not formed in a proper manner. According to them senior citizens are not getting their pensions regularly. "it has many a times happened that we are

getting Rs 100 for four months. What kind of justice is being done to us", said one of the protesters. What is the basis of deciding pensions for poor old people?

"Giving Rs 100 doesn't solve their troubles at all", said S.Devraj, president of Aikyata. He also said that old aged couples having a son are not eligible for pensions as per rule this is not at all justified since even the sons are jobless at times. They become drunkards, which in turn worsen the conditions of parents. He further added that government should take feasible measures so that senior citizens in slums can be benefited by its policies in the long run.

No strict laws governing pet shops

A pet shop in Shivajinagar runs successfully even without a license to sell exotic birds and animals

VAISHNAVI VITTAL

Bangalore, Oct 24: Pet Planet, a pet store in Shivajinagar runs without a license. The store sells a variety of pets that includes Persian cats, exotic birds like Macaws, African Grey parrot, Golden cockatiel, Pheasants, fishes and others. According to the laws permission needs to be taken from a local body to sell these animals. But Shariff, the owner of the shop says he needs no permission.

"We don't require permission from any state or central government. It is legal. All the birds are from India and are bred here", he said. Shariff's father, co-owner of the shop, said that these birds are imported from various countries though they are bred in India. "We only require a certificate for trading purposes", he

added.

The Medical Officer of Shivajinagar says that no license has been issued to this shop.

Prakash Reddy, Deputy Director of Animal Husbandry said that all pet shops in the city need permission from a local authority. But the owners of Pet Planet in Shivajinagar seem to think otherwise.

"According to the corporation records we have not given any license to this shop", said Reddy. He further added, "It is against the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and they should get permission from a local body. Most animals are smuggled. Even this is a problem". He further explained, "Licensing will be implemented and the rules will be brought out in two months. Till then these birds will have to wait",

Pic(k) of the week



Despite its popularity, Barbie remains a distant dream for many poor children. Indian Economy may have experienced an eight per cent growth rate in the last four years. Yet it is estimated that two-thirds of its 1.1 billion inhabitants live off less than \$2 a day
Pic by Aditi Soni