

ARTITUDE

Jun 01 - Jun 07, 2024

Bindu Gopal Rao

Today, a lush green eco-sanctuary in KRC Road, Doddagubbi, will turn into a carnival celebrating mother Earth. Reason? Bhoomi Habba - a unique festival designed to reconnect people with nature - is making a return for its 2024 edition. Often held around World Environment Day (June 5), the festival offers a vibrant celebration of the Earth through workshops, art exhibits, live performances, and kiosks offering eco-friendly items.

Held at civil society, Visthar's eco-sanctuary, Bhoomi Habba goes beyond simply raising awareness by aiming to reconnect people with nature and inspire a shift in perspective on our relationship with our planet vis-a-vis each other.

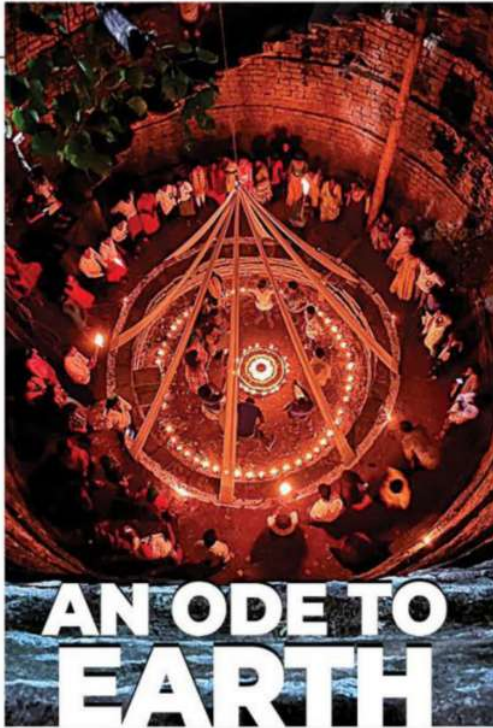
"The Bhoomi Habba is a response to our ecological crisis. The present crisis stems from a mindset that sees nature as a 'resource' to be profited from. We need a different worldview that evokes love, respect, equity, and justice for our world. Through the many multi-art events and conversations, Bhoomi Habba offers a counter-cultural perspective to today's environmental challenges," says Mercy Kappen, Executive Director of Visthar.

Water wise

The thematic focus of Bhoomi Habba 2024 is "Save Water, Save Lives". Through a series of creative workshops, panel discussions, and interactive exhibits, the festival focuses attention on the water crisis in Bangalore.

Through creative art forms such as theatre, dance, music, cartooning, photo essays, storytelling, panel discussions and more, participants will engage with experts and community leaders to explore holistic strategies to mitigate the problem. Participants would also be offered opportunities to learn the root causes of the water crisis, how different people are affected differently by the same crisis, and the emerging solutions.

Water activists will share their critical perspective on how power and politics have shaped the conversation around water crisis and its solutions. At the cartooning workshop, for instance, famed cartoonist Dinesh Francis invites participants to share their experiences of the water crisis through cartoons. "Cartooning is a powerful method to express social concerns, as we have seen these last ten years at the Bhoomi Habba," says Dinesh.



Bhoomi Habba's 16th edition returns this Saturday. Engage in a day-long celebration of the planet, focusing on the urgent water crisis



Evolving with time

Bhoomi Habba began as the "Festival of Justpeace", a wordplay, reflecting the idea that true peace requires justice. Held around May Day, it was part of an International School of Peace programme offered by Visthar and the Interfaith

Cooperation Forum.

When the School of Peace relocated in 2012, Visthar continued the spirit of the event under a new banner - Bhoomi Habba. This shift recognised the need to expand the concept of justice and peace to encompass ecological



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YOUR GUIDE TO A DELIGHTFUL DAY

PERFORMANCES

- Indian Folk Band - Djembe Balu and his team
- Together Unto Freedom - a theatre performance by the Visthar Ranga Shale on the way out of the environmental crisis
- 'Iha' - the songs of Shishunala Sharifa, a theatre performance by Anish Victor.
- Indigenous Instrumental Music, by Siddharth
- Folk Dance, by the Timbaktu Children's Troupe.
- Movement Dance, with Preethesh
- Storytelling, with Anish Victor

FILM SCREENING

- Award-winning short films and documentaries on environmental issues, especially on water crisis

WORKSHOPS

- Cartoon drawing workshop, with Dinesh Francis
- Community Painting Workshop with Priscilla
- "Forgotten Greens, the foraging and plant-identifying" workshop by Mahika Morr
- Story Heart Circles, with Ramya.
- DIY Asalato, Make your own indigenous instrument with Siddharth
- Seed-Ball Making with the Environmentalist Foundation of India
- Warli Painting workshop by Akshaya
- Recycled, handmade Papermaking Workshop at Srujana
- Trash to Toys with Antara Mukherjee
- Poetry Workshop with Neha Ann
- Medicinal Plants with Noor Fatima

EXHIBITIONS

- Nature-themed paintings by Akhil Jacob.
- 'Gender and Water' photo story by Fahad.
- Water Journeys Poster exhibitions
- Unravelling Animism by Anjali.
- Echoes of Thirst, installation by Archa, on water conservation
- Live Painting, by the artists from Art Mantram
- Travellers' Katte, Tree stories by Charumathi Supraja

CONVERSATIONS

- Climate Change in the Metropolis by Kshithij
- Film Screening and Discussion on Vrishabhavathi Rivers by EFI
- Water retention, degradation, and conservation with Amrutha
- 'Spacewalk' on the unique architecture and artistic spaces at Visthar with David Selvaraj.

well-being and relationship between humans and the Earth.

"The festival has taken on new themes to reflect the evolving concerns of the citizens of Bangalore. Ten years ago, we looked at the crisis of waste suffocating the city. This year, we focus on the city's water crisis. Over the years, the festival has increased in popularity. 4,000+ people joined us to celebrate the Bhoomi Habba last year. More young people are also participating each year," says Kappen.

Advocating sustainability

Bhoomi Habba combines art, games and education to raise awareness about the environmental crisis. Songs, paintings, stories, and theatre inspire participants to reflect on our world. At the Warli Painting workshop, for instance, Akshaya, a warli painter, will introduce participants to a different aesthetic of seeing and representing the world. "Learning an Adivasi art form shifts our perspective and helps us see our world from a more ecologically sensitive standpoint," says Akshaya.

Apart from award-winning documentaries, films and photo exhibitions, the festival will host stalls offering sustainable items. Crafter Space, for instance, will feature sustainable creations directly from rural crafts communities. While Antara Mukherjee will lead a workshop on transforming trash to toys, Noor Fatima will enlighten participants on medicinal plants.

Amidst the flurry of activities, it is only obvious that participants would feel the need to grab a grub in the day-long affair. The food festival at the Bhoomi Habba features diverse traditional foods and is a big draw. The food offered here combine good taste with environmental consciousness. The Timbaktu Collective's outlets, for instance, will feature a wide range of millet foods that require far less water to cultivate and are ideal in a world affected by climate change. Over twenty food stalls invite participants to explore new tastes, recipes, and ideas.

The festival boasts of sustainable alternatives for almost everything imaginable. "I will share the stories behind the sustainable architectural spaces in our campus during our 'Space Walk,'" says David Selvaraj, Founder and Executive Trustee of Visthar.

WHEN & WHERE?

- The Bhoomi Habba is from 10am - 7pm on Saturday, June 8, at the Visthar campus, off Hennur Main Road.
- Entry: Rs 50
- Address: Visthar, KRC Road, Kothanur Post, Doddagubbi, Bengaluru 560077
- Contact: Mercy Kappen - 9945551310