



**Figure 2.** *Ficus benghalensis* L. (Inset) Drooping branches showing unilateral growth (in red) and gravitational force (in yellow);  $F$ , External force;  $g$ , Gravitational pull;  $m$ , Canopy body-mass.

Bose Indian Botanic Garden, Howrah; the Pillalamarri near Hyderabad; Dodda Alada Mara near Ramohalli, Bengaluru; Theosophical Society Big Banyan in Chennai; Ranthambore Banyan tree in Rajasthan and the Lahaina Banyan tree in Hawaii<sup>2</sup>.

A recent survey revealed that the gigantic stature of this tree, manifesting the archaic botanical treasure of the Upper Ganga Ramsar site, is likely to experience detrimental demographic pressures in the near future, due to disproportionate unilateral expansion and southward drooping of its canopy, down towards the lowlands of the Gangetic river basin, from the elevated mud-mound (Figure 2), triggered by earth's gravitational pull ( $g$ ). Such growth imbalance affects lateral dislocation of body-mass ( $m$ ) of the tree canopy from the centre, exerting external force ( $F$ ) upon the main trunk complementing Newton's second law,

$F = mg$ . Once this force exceeds the 'threshold capacity' of the main trunk, it would split vertically and eventually get ruptured. Dearth of prop roots to buffer or counteract this pressure pull, makes the tree much more susceptible to the detrimental impact.

Further, the tree is getting exposed to damping sacred ethics under the impact of modernization and dwindling superstitious and religious beliefs. On the other hand, the ancestral genetic components sequestered within its pristine gene pool are also certain to possess immense breeding applications in genetic engineering and inducing resistance traits in progenies. It is therefore extremely essential to safeguard the tree against anticipated dilapidation and feared demographic adversities. An instant remedy is to furnish stout, forked bamboo supports, imitating prop roots, to the drooping branches of the tree. This would immedi-

ately mitigate  $F$ , the main detrimental pressure, cement the canopy stature and counteract devastation with an added value of revamped pristine possessions and sacred attributes of this tree.

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## Corrigendum

### Shangai rankings 2016: poor performance of Indian universities

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This correspondence was based on the 15 June Global Ranking in Engineering & Technology. The Shanghai Rankings ARWU Report published on 15 August show overall ranking of Universities including all subjects; hence some mismatch between the two is reflected in my note also. For example, the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru is shown to

occupy 225th position in the Engineering & Technology Report of 15 June but it ranks 325 in the ARWU Report of 15 August. The Indian Institutes of Technology (Kharagpur, Bombay, Delhi, Kanpur and Madras) find a place in the 15 June Report but in the overall ranking (ARWU) Report of 15 August, none of the Indian IITs or Universities are ranked

among the top 500. So the overall situation of Indian Institutions is dismal compared with my report already published.

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