

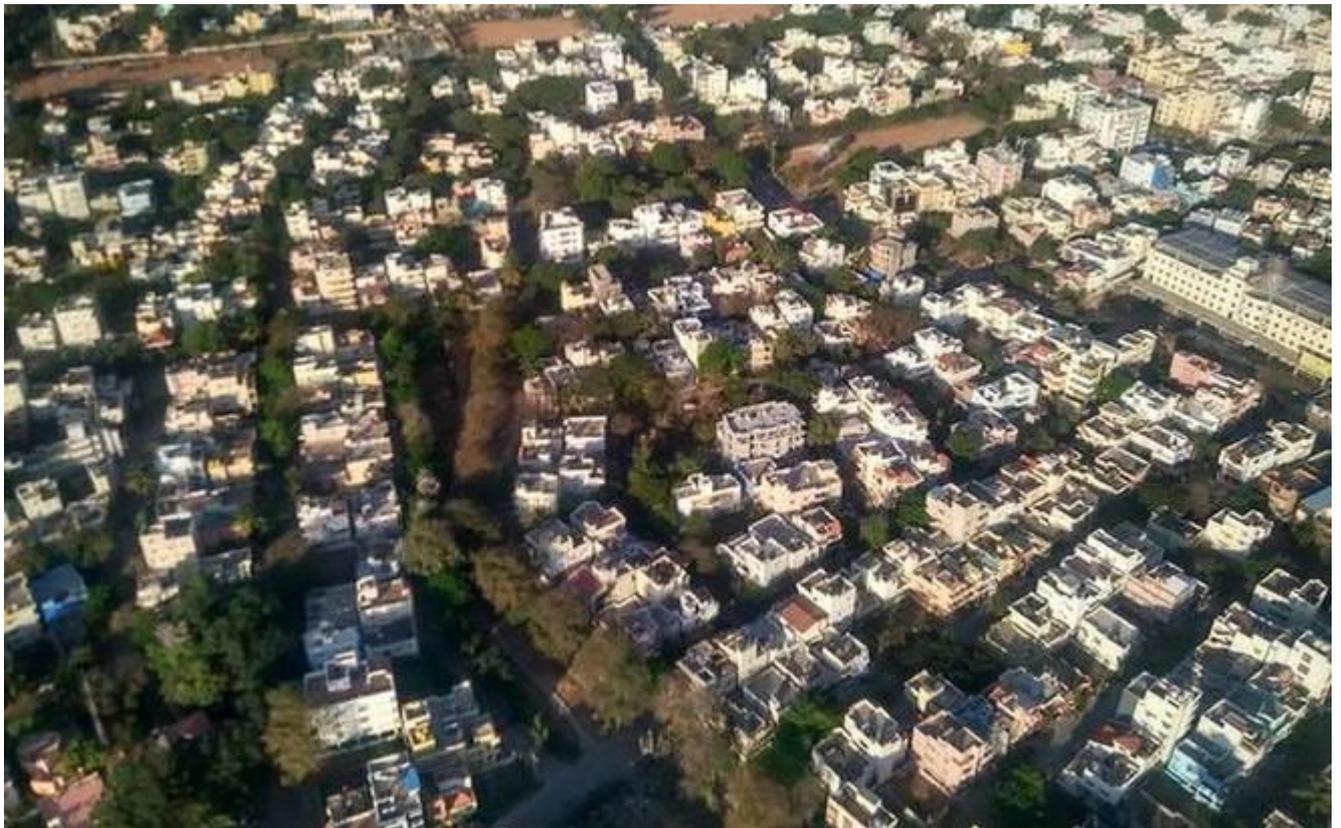
BENGALURU

# Bengaluru maps its solar wealth



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*Figure 1: Sun seekers: Bengaluru's rooftops are getting ready to harvest free power | Photo Credit: Handout E mail*

## Sends helicopter to collect data on the solar energy potential of its rooftops

On a hot Tuesday, a helicopter hovering over the rooftops of the city had a singular mission: to help people make hay while the sun shines. It was mapping the solar potential of rooftops. This data, which will be put in the public domain, could help people reduce their electricity bills and also make some money by consuming and/or selling the solar energy generated.

Flying over villas, high-rises, independent, smaller houses and large apartment complexes, the ‘web-based rooftop photovoltaic tool using aerial LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) project’, being executed by the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP) for the [Bangalore](#) Electricity Supply Company (Bescom), has been mapping rooftop solar prospects.

Taking off from Jakkur Aerodrome, the helicopter lingered particularly over dense concrete stretches, as the team aboard, including *The Hindu*, which was given exclusive access, took notes.

The helicopter has a camera that emits laser pulses. Reflections from the ground get captured, creating a rough 3D map. This raw data will be sent to the Defence Ministry for vetting, after which will begin the process of shadow analysis and creation of a model city map.

### Almost on target

In two-and-a-half weeks, about 990-odd sq km have been covered. This is a little short of the 1,100 sq km target, on account of no-fly zones.

“Dense urban sprawls and industrial zones such as Electronics City and Peenya were covered,” said Saptak Ghosh, Research Scientist, CSTEP. In about seven months, the outcome could be a game-changer for Bescom and its consumers. Bescom will move to achieve the 1 GW solar target for 2021-22, with a map of the most lucrative rooftops.

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