

Streetlighting in Pune not up to mark: Experts

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PUNE is a beautiful city with a lot of potential but its street lighting leaves much to be desired," said Professor Warren Julian, Director of Lighting Studies, Professor of Architectural and Design Science and Dean at the University of Sydney, Australia.

Julian was in the city to attend a conference organised by the city-based Maharashtra Institute of Technology's Lighting Research Academy.

Reginald Wilson, head of Asia Pacific Office of the International Darksky Associa-

tion, said there was a tremendous amount of "visual clutter" - referring to the neon signs and billboards - which he termed "a terrible waste of energy."

The duo was part of the panel that the MIT had brought together to suggest measures for its 'city beautification programme.'

Julian said while governments across the world spend huge amount on streetlights, most of them do not pay any attention to their maintenance. Citing the extent of ignorance about proper lighting among people, he said while the tunnels on the Mumbai-Pune highway are well-lit, they do not serve any real purpose.

"This makes driving through them dangerous. What should have been done instead was to make sure that the light reflected off surfaces and aided the drivers, which is not the case now," he explained.

Asked if the city needed to switch from the present orange streetlights to whiter light sources, Julian said that there were cost constraints. "In Sydney's central part of the city, you have white lighting, while orange lighting is used in the outlying suburbs," he said.

Rajesh Kochhar, chief executive, C&I Business, Wipro Lighting, said lighting has to be part of the larger master plan for the city. "As Pune

grows, the need for a master plan becomes imperative," he asserted. Wipro, Crompton Greaves and Bajaj are the companies that are partnering MIT in the post graduate programme in lighting technology, which it launched during the last academic session.

Sunil Karad, Director, MIT-Lighting Research Academy, said that once the students finished the course, they would be working in the top lighting companies as energy auditors.

"MIT is doing its bit, having installed solar water heaters in the Gurukul campus, and plans in the pipeline to do the same at its Rajbaug campus," said Karad.