

Devarabisanahalli lake on its way to a slow death

By Jagruthi Maddela (https://www.thehansindia.com/home/authors_posts/Jagruthi-Maddela/570) | THE HANS INDIA | Feb 23, 2019 , 01:56 PM IST



BENGALURU: On Thursday, lake activists have said that, the water level at Devarabisanahalli Lake has been receded by 4 feet in the last two months and the waterbody might be going through the process of a slow death.

While speaking at a discussion on 'Urban lakes: Water security and people's livelihood', which was organized by the Karnataka Environment Research Foundation, Energy and Wetlands Research Group and the Centre for Ecological Studies and the Indian Institution of Science (IISc).

Shalini Susheel, a volunteer who is incharge of the conservation of Devarabisanahalli Lake, had said that, "After successful completion of Phase 1 of the rejuvenation project, we're now concerned about the health of the lake. In January and February, water level is down more than 4ft due to a large construction footprint which has come up very close on the side of the lake. Due to this, there has been a steady drop in water levels and we're afraid that over 30,000 fish released into the lake post rejuvenation may fail to survive. The non-availability of an efficient sewage treatment plant (STP) is also a cause for concern. Right now, sewage is simply diverted downstream to Varthur Lake."

Elangovan a member of the Whitefield Rising and volunteer working on the Varthur Lake rejuvenation project said, "Dumping of domestic and solid waste right near the lakebed in Varthur is a problem that must be tackled on a war footing."

"The Jakkur Lake model of rejuvenation must be followed for conservation of both Bellandur and Varthur lakes. The lake must be desilted and instead of diverting sewage downstream to other water bodies, it must be properly treated using an STP," said TV Ramachandra of the Centre for Ecological Sciences, IISc.

Solid waste management expert Almitra Patel said, "The government should mandate detergent companies to disclose the phosphorus content in their products on their labels so that consumers can make an informed decision."

"There is an urgent need to integrate various agencies during conservation of a lake. Lake preservation and ensuring that the groundwater table is replenished and of good quality can go a long way in solving Bengaluru's problems. Proper water governance is the need of the hour. We'll submit a list of our concerns and recommendations with the National Green Tribunal soon," said CJ Jagadeesha, chairman of the Karnataka Environment Research Foundation.