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## Drain desilting: BBMP pats its own back

Says 110 km of drains desilted; Citizens say delay in completing works may lead to flooding as city stares at monsoon

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BENGALURU: The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is patting itself after desilting 110 km of the 440 km drain network in the City. Citizens and experts point out that it is not even half the work done. And, monsoon is just round the corner. The BBMP has also set August as its target to complete the remaining 330 km of drain network. After this, it plans to launch a web page on its website asking people to rate the works.

But citizens and experts said that instead of asking people to rate, the civic body should focus on completing the works expeditiously so that there is no flooding this year. They also state that BBMP should itself do a reality check after every kilometre and see the ground reality.

“BBMP’s target is August while it should have been June. Work started late. Besides, during the pre-monsoon showers it has been observed that the silt piled up on the roadsides was washed back into the drains. This means work was done only on paper,” said Bhumika C, a resident of Magadi Road.

BBMP officials said: “From the 110 km desilted, 10,000 tonnes of silt was collected and sent to abandoned quarry sites in Anjanapura, Bellahalli, Bommanahalli and Mittiganahalli. Desilting will ensure there is no flooding and the work is being done under the annual maintenance scheme, where the contractor will be penalised for any damage or flooding.”

Prof T V Ramachandra from Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), said contractors’ lethargic attitude will only pose more problems. Annapoorna Kamath, Managing Trustee, Satya Foundation, said it would have been better if the work had started earlier. However, now BBMP should prioritise and ensure that major drains and major roads where heavy traffic plies is completed and maintained first. “BBMP should also ensure that drains are well connected to the lakes and free of garbage at these locations,” she said.

Mayor Gangambike Mallikarjun admitted to the delay and said that since it was election year, work started late. The BBMP will ensure maximum is done before the monsoon hits the city, she said.

**Garbage on roads greets Mayor during inspection**  
Mayor Gangambike Mallikarjun on Tuesday inspected the ongoing silt management and optic fibre cable works undertaken in the city. She did a realty check of major roads, including Nandidurg Road, Trinity Circle, Jayamahall, Mysuru Road and Nayanadanahalli junction. She took officials to task for the slow pace of work and garbage on road sides. She asked the Bescom officials to manage the OFC cables immediately. She said a panel was being formed to check damages to roads.

“The panel will also ensure that roads are garbage free and drains are well maintained,” she said. Mayor also directed the staffers to set up 63 emergency control room numbers exclusively for the monsoon. Mayor and BBMP Commissioner will hold a meeting with engineers and executive engineers to assess the work done and the next course of action.