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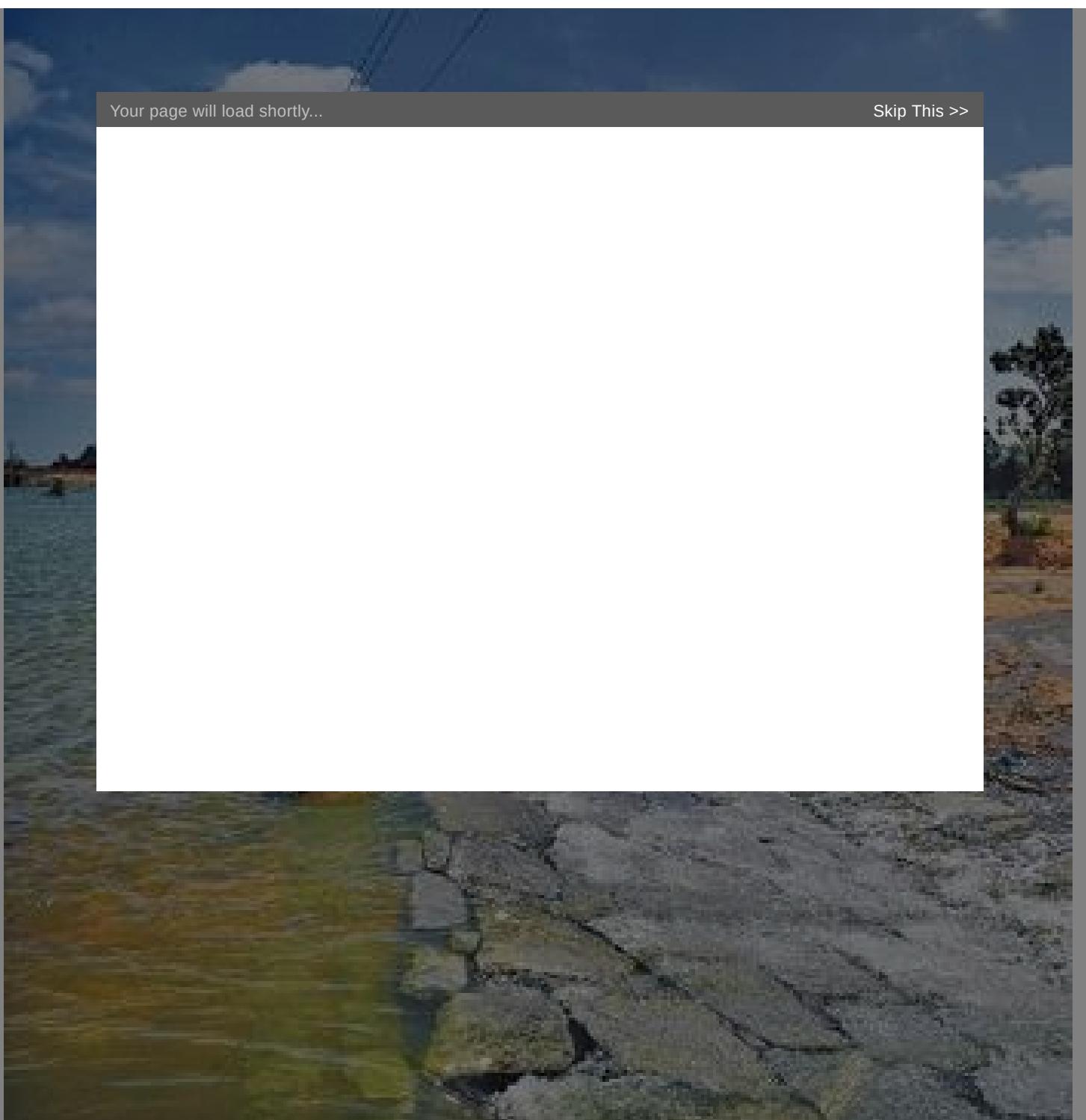


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Lakes in Kolar. (Photo | EPS)

By Akram Mohammed

Express News Service

BENGALURU: Residents of Lakshmisagar and nearby villages in Kolar had been wary of the Koramangala-Challaghatta (KC) Valley scheme ever since the secondary treated water from Bengaluru was released in June this year. Their fears of contaminated water being pumped into the lakes came true in a little over a month as lack of coordination between two departments working on the project

resulted in untreated water that plagues Bellandur, Varthur and other lakes of the city entering the lakes of neighbouring Kolar district.

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The project was implemented in two phases. The first phase involved the construction of a sewage treatment plant (STP) and a water supply system. The STP was built in a novel, integrated manner, combining primary and secondary treatment stages. It also includes sludge handling and reuse facilities. The treated effluent from the STP is used for irrigation and other non-potable purposes. The water supply system consists of a network of pipes, pumps, and storage tanks. The project has significantly reduced flooding in the area by managing excess rainfall runoff effectively.

Though the project has been successful in addressing flooding issues, there are some challenges. One major challenge is the maintenance of the complex infrastructure, which requires significant resources and expertise. Another challenge is ensuring the long-term sustainability of the project, particularly in terms of energy consumption and waste management. The project has also faced some political opposition, as it required the relocation of some residents and businesses.

Water Supply and Sewerage Board (WSSB) has invested heavily in the project, and its success has been widely recognized. The project has received several awards and accolades, including the Best Urban Drainage Project at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) Awards. It has also been featured in various international publications and conferences, highlighting its innovative approach to urban flooding management.

Apart from the main project, there have been several other initiatives taken by the WSSB to address flooding issues. One such initiative is the construction of a new pumping station near the Chikkaballapur Road, which has helped to alleviate flooding in that area. Another initiative is the implementation of a backflow prevention system, which has prevented flooding in several residential areas. The WSSB has also initiated a campaign to encourage people to use rainwater harvesting systems, which can help to reduce flooding by reducing the volume of surface runoff.

According to the WSSB, the project has treated over 10 million liters of wastewater daily, which is equivalent to the water usage of approximately 100,000 households. The treated effluent is used for various non-potable purposes, such as irrigation of public parks and gardens. The project has also helped to improve the overall quality of life in the area, as it has provided a reliable source of clean water and reduced flooding risks.

“Since a large quantity of vegetables consumed in the city are grown in Kolar and surrounding districts, any toxins or heavy elements in the water pumped to the lakes might enter the food chain causing health problems,” he said. Reddy, one of the petitioners in High Court on the issue, has also demanded that tertiary treated water be released.

However, BWSSB officials have refuted allegations regarding the quality of water, maintaining that all standards were met and heavy elements were below detectable levels.

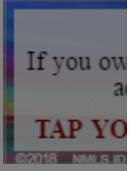
Experts such as environmentalist A N Yellappa Reddy and IISc scientist T V Ramachandra have urged the government to explore alternate treatment methods to ensure that water pumped into lakes in these drought hit districts.

What happened

Ever since the first week of June, during a reality check by The New Indian Express, villagers had complained about the quality of water being supplied. The water, which was first pumped into Lakshmisagar lake, carried a distinct odour of detergent, raising concern among the local population in the parched district.

A Nagaraj, a resident of Lakshmisagar village, who had complained about mild frothing on the edges of lakes and along makeshift canals during the second week of June itself, was of the view that any water su Your page will load shortly... Skip This >> lad that

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