

[Home](#) / [City](#) / [Top Bengaluru Stories](#) / BDA blames Varthur Lake fire on grass-cutting villagers

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A group of lake experts including those from the Indian Institute of Science might take up the issue and conduct a thorough inspection.

BDA officials are now blaming the nearby villagers harvesting the grass in Varthur lake for the fire that broke out on Sunday afternoon in the water body.

Every morning, around 10 villagers are seen harvesting the grass, gathering the weeds in the lake and busy dumping it in their boats.

Now, they are at the receiving end as the Bangalore Development Authority is pointing fingers at them for the blaze.

“As they have boats, only the grass cutters have access to the part of the wetland that caught fire. Nobody else can go that far as there is water all around. While cutting the grass, they might have lit a cigarette and stubbed it somewhere, intentionally or unintentionally,” Aravind, assistant executive engineer, BDA told *DH*.

Meanwhile, one of the city-based mining firms that has signed an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the BDA to carry out the rejuvenation and developmental works at the lake is in the process of preparing a detailed plan.

“There were instances of fire at the Bellandur lake as well. Varthur lake has water flowing in from Bellandur lake, and both of them are equally polluted. The specific reason for the fire is not clear. It is very unlikely that anyone can predict or stop such fires in the future. Hence, resolving the issue of fire in the lake is beyond our scope,” said an official from the firm.

A group of lake experts including those from the Indian Institute of Science might take up the issue and conduct a thorough inspection.

“Watershed area and wetland falling under the 75 m buffer zone are being destroyed by dumping of garbage and debris from apartments, industries and households. No funds are earmarked by the state government for the Varthur lake unlike the Bellandur lake that received Rs 350 crore from the government,” said Jagadish Reddy, the lake warden.