

General will abounds but civic will is missing



WHAT A LOSS: Mahadevapura has lost 45% to 60% of its green belt due to unplanned development and the greed of land sharks

Bosky Khanna. BANGALORE

It saw the city lights only recently. Many parts of Mahadevapura constituency were included in the city limits with the formation of the BBMP. The constituency houses a large number of lakes. Unfortunately, it also carries the city's garbage.

Furthermore, the constituency is losing its green cover due to unbridled constructions. Unplanned development laced with corruption and lack of government initiative has been blamed for the situation.

The last two years have seen much of greenery vanishing in the name of development in the Mahadevapura wards, says Babu Rao, president of Gururaja Layout Residents' Association in Doddanakunte. The constituency does not have more than 30% to 35% greenery and lung spaces left.

But some popular efforts have seen sprouting in the recent past to put back a green crown over the area but they are grossly inadequate, feels Rao.

Doddanakunte does not boast of a park or playfield. "When we ask for a park or playfield, officials want us to show them the space. Where shall we find that?" Rao asks.

Green cover is falling and the lakes are choking with garbage. People are least worried. This constituency needs tech-savvy, green-conscious corporators

He does not rate the area more than two on a scale of one to ten, where one is the lowest and ten is the highest. Not that the area is not blessed with water bodies and lakes. Neglect of water bodies and encroachment of open spaces coupled with wanton dumping of dirt and garbage have spelt doom for most areas, says Pushpa Rajesh, a resident.

TV Ramachandra, from Energy and Wetlands Research Group Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, says that 500 MLD (million litres daily) of Bangalore's sewerage passes through Bellandur and Varthur lakes.

The green belt is disappearing rapidly due to encroachments. The corporators should do some-

thing about this immediately, says Ramachandra. He points that the constituency has lost 45% 60% of its green belt due to development. This has also changed the natural topography of the land which people are unaware of. The tree cover has fallen drastically. It is sad to note that people are not worried about it at all. Varthur area had large number of paddy fields which have been replaced by mega apartment complexes now.

Ramachandra gives Mahadevapura a rating of just one. Parks and playgrounds have been indiscriminately removed in the area. One can find playgrounds only in school campuses. He blames unplanned development, lack of governance and land mafia for the prevailing situation of the layouts and loss of lake chain of Gunjur, Varthur, Bellandur, Siddhapur, Mahadevapura and Doddanakundi.

This constituency needs tech-savvy, green-conscious corporators if it has to be saved, say environmentalists. They point out that many tech-giants that have set up shops in this part of the city are quite willing to help if civic initiative is taken. Corporate social commitment will flow only if civic authorities show interest. Isolated attempts are being taken up for avenue-greening and planting saplings on open spaces but there ought to be a concerted effort, they say.

k_bosky@dnaindia.net



If you have any query or suggestion, please mail p_surendran@dnaindia.net