

# UB CITY FLOODING: LOKAYUKTA HAD WARNED AGAINST BLOCKING STORM WATER DRAIN

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The city was shocked to see Vittal Mallya Road being flooded with five feet of water in front of the posh UB City Building after the city received 100 mm rainfall last week. But the people in the government and environmentalists, who tried to clear the encroachment of a storm water drain, right next to the building, are not surprised.

Earlier, a large storm water drain flowed between UB City and the star hotel built by the Raheja Group. Then Lokayukta Justice Santosh Hegde intervened and suggested that the drain be restored to mitigate floods in the tony area, but the government refused to heed his advice. Instead, it allowed property owners to encroach the drain and subsequently it was filled up.

"We are paying for the mistakes we committed in the past. We have built structures over a number of water bodies and storm water drains which has resulted in repeated flooding of the city. The government allowed UB City and Raheja Group property to become one unit, though they were earlier



## Bizarre theory!

● Some old Bengalureans believe that it was a bad omen when the Ganesha temple behind UB City was flooded after the storm water drain was blocked. It has had a catastrophic effect on the owners of the building, they say.

separated by a large storm water drain. If the drain had been retained, we would not have seen cars floating on the road," an environmentalist said.

Justice Hegde said the government was made aware of the possible flood situation if the drain was not left open. "In fact, there was also a suggestion to take the rainwater around the building, but the carriage way was very small compared to the old drain. Water has obviously nowhere to go and it floods the street. There have been more such cases in the recent past in

the city where waterways have been encroached upon," he said.

A BBMP engineer explained that UB City and the star hotel are located at such a point where water from Lavelle Road and St Mark's Road flows down. As the main storm water drain has been blocked, the road is seeing flooding over the last two years.

The water channel that earlier fed Sampangi Ramanagar Tank has been cut off. The tank itself has been converted into "Kantheerava Stadium," the engineer said.