

## MASSIVE AGITATION TO SAVE SANKEY FROM LAND SHARKS

By Bharat A Patel, Bangalore Mirror Bureau | Oct 10, 2015, 04.00 AM IST



*Sankey Tank walkway is a popular track for walkers and joggers in the area*

Save Sankey Forum and other organisations are coming together to fight for the survival of Sankey Tank lake against land sharks illegally holding property, encroaching and constructing in the lake's catchment area. The forum is now up in arms against high-rise buildings coming up in that area and is planning a massive protest next week.

Out of a total of 7.2 acres, six acres have already been sold and registered in the name of Gulf Oil Corporation Limited, and which the government has the power to acquire.

The forum has been agitating for the preservation of Sankey Tank's natural environment and for the protection of flora and fauna at the lake and its abutting areas. The Save Sankey Forum's 5,000 people are supporting the cause through a signature campaign. On Thursday, the noted freedom fighter HS Doreswamy visited the Sankey Tank and had a discussion with the forum. He also lent his support to the forum and will be present at the agitation that will be held in next week.

Chidanand Kulkarni, president of Save Sankey Forum, told Bangalore Mirror, "We have commenced a public

campaign called 'Save Sankey Campaign' against corporates - namely Gulf Oil Corporation and Mantri Developers - who are trying hard to grab the last piece of forest land in the 'Kadu Malleshwara' area abutting Sankey Tank, which also is the most precious lung space vital for the survival of both animal and plant life."

The residents of Malleswaram and adjoining localities are pensive about the High Courts' decision especially after the two orders passed by the High Court.

"The government had taken precaution by filing a review petition in the high court but that would not be enough. We are demanding that the government acquire the land, irrespective of whatever the high Court decides by favouring them or if it decides otherwise also. Either way, the government has the power to issue a notification of acquisition under the Land Acquisition Act, Section 5. Our demand is to protect the pristine forest land that was transferred by oversight or mistake.

The fact remains that the government land has been transferred to private who are going to exploit it for profit and damage the environment. The environment damage will be at large scale, in the 7 acre land there are more than 1569 grown trees," said Kulkarni. "It is the catchment area of the lake; therefore our agitation is against

any high-rise building coming up. We don't want another Miller's lake, Bellandur lake and Sarakki lake incident to happen with Sankey."

One of the members of Malleswaram Swabhimana Initiative, Ramaswamy VN, said, "Solid waste and sewage would definitely percolate into the lake and the lake is bound to get depleted. There was a report from the IISc, they should listen to them. If they build high-rise buildings, the future generations would be affected without a natural habitat. Even freedom fighter Doreswamy had announced support to our agitation even though he is not well. He has asked us to take it in a bigger way."

Meanwhile, Mantri Devel-opers refused to comment.

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