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Bengaluru lakes dirty: Stink is on you, BWSSB

DC CORRESPONDENT | June 06, 2015, 01.06 am IST



Foam coming out of Varthur lake

Bengaluru: A leading city scientist has lashed out, calling for stiff fines to be imposed against agencies and industries that release untreated effluents into lakes.

Standing against the backdrop of Varthur Lake that's become a byword for Bengaluru's garbage city tag, Prof T.V. Ramachandra said all encroachments around water bodies should be made a cognisable and non-bailable offence and that apart from restricting the entry of sewage into lakes, wetlands should be built around water bodies to avoid pollution and all city's lakes fenced. He was releasing a status report on Varthur Lake on Friday to mark World Environment Day.

Though the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board is constructing a sewage treatment plant at the inlet point of Varthur Lake, it could be too little, too late. The ongoing construction of the STP will not be completed before August 2016, and even when functional, it may not make a big difference as the plant will only have treating capacity of 90 MLD. But as much as 450 MLD of sewage enters Varthur and Bellandur lakes, while both lakes will only have combined capacity of 180 MLD.

A Guidebook to save lakes

Prof T.V. Ramachandra, who released a status report on Varthur Lake on Friday, made some important recommendations:

- Blanket ban on construction activities in valley zones
- Building a sewage collection system with UGDs that will take future growth into consideration
- Digitisation of land records using Spatial Decision Support System and making it open to public
- Single agency with statutory and financial autonomy to be the custodian of wetlands and lakes (ownership, maintenance, enforcement and penalisation of polluters and encroachers)
- Rationalisation of functions and cooperation among various agencies such as BBMP, BWSSB and BDA

Deccan Chronicle has one more suggestion - pull up the government department that is at the heart of this mess. No, not the all but toothless Pollution Control Board, but the BWSSB. What are they doing? Instead of setting up Sewage Treatment plants in our neighbourhoods and at the point where drains open into the lakes, they have even allowed sewage to seep into stormwater drains. The stench is rising!

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