

## **BWSSB Says it Needs Rs 1,000 Cr to Save Two Lakes**

By Express News Service

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**BENGALURU:** The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) on Thursday informed Upa Lokayukta Justice Subhash B Adi that it needs nearly Rs 1,000 crore to set up treatment plants at the water inlets to Bellandur and Varthur lakes.

BWSSB engineer-in-chief Venkataraju appeared for a hearing conducted by Justice Adi in the light of froth in Bellandur Lake catching fire due to a chemical reaction. He filed a preliminary report on the proposal of providing treatment plants and preventing sewage water from entering Bellandur and Varthur lakes.

As per the report, there are about 17 inlet points at Bellandur Lake, out of which, five are functional only during the rainy season. Treated water enters the lake at two points. However, for areas such as Nagasandra slum, Nagasandra Colony, Ibbalur, Agaram, Agaram Pump House, Shanivagilu Tank Bed and Koramangala, the work is in progress.

“Because of the large quantity of chemicals and other minerals entering the lake, there was a fire recently. Most of the storm water drains connecting the lakes before Bellandur have been encroached upon. As a result, free flow of water from Agara Lake to Bellandur, Bellandur Lake to Varthur Lake and downstream is choked. This causes a large quantity of foam formation at the narrow storm water area,” the report says.

It also said that there are around 110 villages and over 500 industrial units around Varthur and Bellandur lakes and effluents from these industries enter both the lakes.

Environment activist Nagesh said that most apartments that have installed sewage treatment plants (STPs) are using just 40 to 50 per cent of the treated sewage. The remaining 50 per cent is let into the storm water drains and it ultimately enters the lake.

He also demonstrated that STPs established by BWSSB and the apartments will not reduce the level of water pollution as nitrates and phosphorous remain in treated water and is not fit for consumption or for flora and fauna too. He also said the phosphorous and nitrates result in the formation of algae, which is not good for aquatic life. However, treated water can be used for gardening, he said.

He said that a provision for wetland is a must after the discharge of treated sewage. Without the wetland even if the water is treated and discharged to the lake, the problem of water pollution cannot be addressed. If wetlands are provided for the purpose of bio-remediation, the water that would be available in lake would be potable and Bengaluru would get a huge quantity of water, he said.

As these two lakes have a huge potential for tourism, Justice Adi issued a notice to KSTDC authorities to explore the possibilities.

The Additional Chief Secretary to Urban Development Department, Chief Executive Officer of Lake Development Authority, Commissioners of BDA, BBMP, Chairman of BWSSB, Managing Director of KSTDTC, Deputy Commissioner, Bengaluru Urban, Chairman of KSPCB, Professor T V Ramachandra of Centre for Environmental Sciences, IISc, and representatives of NGOs have been asked to appear for a hearing on June 4.

**WATER BODY SCAN**

- Bengaluru Urban Deputy Commissioner V Shankar said that survey of Bellandur (919 acres) and Varthur lakes (448 acres) will be completed in a week. After this, encroachments on the lakes will be removed
- BDA's Chief Engineer said parts of the both the lakes were fenced, but the authority is awaiting removal of encroachments to finish the work. Developing lakes without preventing sewage water entering them is a waste, he said

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BWSSB's preliminary report

### **Nagarottana Scheme to Byrasandra Lake Rescue**

Bengaluru: The Byrasandra lake will be developed under the Nagarottana Scheme, BBMP administrator T M Vijay Bhaskar said after visiting Byrasandra and Kempambudi lakes on Thursday.

Later, at the Kempambudi Lake, Vijay Bhaskar noticed sewage entering the lake. He directed the sewerage board to prevent sewage from entering the lake. “I will tell officials to remove waste from the lake,” he added.