

Bellandur lake in Bangaluru caught fire due to industrial wastes, says IISc

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Bellandur Lake in Bangaluru has been reported to catch fire. According to a team of researcher from Indian Institute of Science (IISc), fire has been due to the large amount of industrial effluents present in the water body. These effluents resulted in the formation of froth which eventually caught fire on 16 May 2015. Lead author Prof TV Ramachandra from Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES) said that water bodies in Bangalore including lake Varthur, Bellandur, Yemalur have been receiving huge amount of untreated industrial wastes which has resulted in formation of foam. He further explained that frothing is caused by pollutants settled as sediments. They churn following strong winds and heavy rainfall, resulting in the froth. According to the findings published in a study titled, Pathetic status of wetlands in Bengaluru: epitome of inefficient and uncoordinated governance, fire in the water bodies has not been due to presence of methane but a mixture of industrial effluents and phosphate led to the fire. Moreover, the froth cannot catch fire on its own until and unless someone gives it a spark. However, Ramachandra noted that froth formation was a 10-year-old problem and now the fire has brought it under attention. According to reports, three major lakes — Varthur, Bellandur and Challaghatta, receive more than 500 million litres of untreated waste daily. Although, media, environmentalists and ecologists have raised their concern towards the worsening situation, but Bengaluru government has been slow to react to the situation. Dr Ramachndra said that proper planning for disposal of sewage should be done immediately.