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Breach seen in Bellandur lake panel

By [Bharath Joshi](#), ET Bureau | Sep 26, 2016, 11.10 AM IST[Post a Comment](#)

BENGALURU: IISc ecologist TV Ramachandra to come out with his own report on polluted lake's revival

Indian Institute of Science ecologist TV Ramachandra will come out with his own report on the Bellandur lake amid clear indications that all is not well with an expert committee tasked with reviving Bengaluru's biggest and most polluted water body, located close to modern technology parks exporting billions dollars worth of software.

A draft report of the 18-member expert committee, formed this May, is ready. However, it is alleged that some of its members have conflicts of interest, besides a lack of consensus on the issue. "The report is not up to the mark. It has been diluted," said committee member Ramachandra, who leads the wetlands research group at the IISc Centre for Ecological Studies. "A proper discussion was not allowed. I'm coming out with my own report. I don't depend on bureaucracy," he said, without elaborating on his report. "Some said the lake has lost relevance. Some said desilting shouldn't be done. Some even blamed bacteria, and not phosphorous or detergents, for the frothing. Industry people have pushed their agenda."

One committee member's nephew takes up engineering contracts for lake restoration while two others are known to have real estate holdings, according to two persons familiar with the matter.

The 919.17-acre Bellandur lake belongs to the koramangala Challaghatta valley, overflowing into the Varthur lake from where it flows down the plateau and joins the Dakshina Pinakini river basin. The lake gets nearly half the city's sewage plus industrial effluents. It made headlines last year when heavy foam and froth spilled onto the roads.

"The main point of holding BWSSB accountable for the sewage has been diluted," said member Ramamurthy, an environment activist who filed a public interest litigation in the High Court in 1998 against government inaction on protecting lakes. "Industrial effluents and detergents can be controlled but what about BWSSB? The correct perspective is missing, which is why everything is getting diluted."

A proposal to allow the lake to dry up for desilting was hotly debated, according to a person who attended one of the committee's meetings recently. "That would take at least three years and make the lake vulnerable to encroachment."

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