

## **Experts' panel on Bellandur Lake set up**

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**BENGALURU:** THE State government has constituted an 18-member expert committee to revive the Bellandur Lake and has mandated it to submit its report by mid-June.

A Government Order in this connection has been issued recently. This follows a high-level meeting held at Vidhana Soudha on May 5 presided by Bengaluru Development Minister K J George in which all civic departments and lake experts took part.

According to the G.O. dated May 10, “The expert committee has been asked to submit its report by the end of six weeks from the date of issue of the order.”

The Additional Chief Secretary, Urban Development will be the Chairman of the Committee and the Engineer Member of the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) will be the Member Secretary of the group. The group comprises environment experts, NGOs fighting for the cause of Bellandur lake and top officials of various civic agencies.

The following are the other members: Commissioner, BDA; Member Secretary, Karnataka State Pollution Control Board; Chairman, Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB); Chief Executive Engineer, Lake Development Authority; Secretary, Minor Irrigation Department; Commissioner, BBMP; Deputy Commissioner, Bengaluru Urban department; Chief Engineer of Waster Water Management, BWSSB;

Chief Executive Officer, Namma Bengaluru Foundation; Prof T V Ramachandra of Indian Institute of Science; Professor Ramaprasad; Dr Yellappa Reddy, Environmentalist; Sharath Chandra, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment; President of Bellandur Residents Welfare Association; Ramamurthy, Petitioner who filed Public Interest Litigation against the inaction of the government to save lakes in the City and Siddaiah, former BBMP Commissioner.

Responding to the formation of the committee, Sridhar Pabbisetty, CEO of Namma Bengaluru Foundation, one of the committee members said, “It is a diverse committee and a welcome move. Hopefully, we will be able to come up with a road map to save the Bellandur lake.”

The G.O also stated that Bellandur Lake was one of the biggest lakes in Bengaluru. The untreated sewage let out from residences, factories, hospitals and the IT/BT industries have polluted it.

The issue of froth over the Bellandur Lake catching fire due to formation of flammable methane gas in May 2015 as well as spilling over on to the neighbouring streets earned the lake national notoriety.