

FIXING CITY'S WATER WOES, STP BY STP

By SOWMYA RAJARAM, Bangalore Mirror Bureau | Updated: Apr 9, 2017, 09.25 AM IST

The April 8 panel discussion with experts on the subject of retrospective sewage treatment plants (STPs) & dual-piping implementation saw a large turnout from members of the public. Organised by the Bangalore Apartments Federation (BAF) to start a public dialogue and to get experts to weigh in on the matter, the public discussion saw not only the contentious matter discussed and dissected, but also offered solutions.

If every house goes for water harvesting and every apartment for STP, then probably, Bengaluru may need not draw any water from BWSSB, this was what the experts had to say during the meet. The experts went on to say that if water harvesting and STPs were introduced in households, then we can save up to 30 TMC feet of water (while Bengaluru requires around 20 TMC feet of water in a year.)

Bangalore Mirror had reported (Bengaluru apartment dwellers agitates over STPs; April 4), that the discussion was being held to generate awareness among the public among the issue, and gain knowledge from independent experts who have years of experience in the field.

One such solution, offered by Latha Raman Jaigopal, architect and co-founder of Inspiration, a design group which focuses on ecology and environment sensitive designs and constructions was to decentralise waste water systems, which can treat sewage water from single households to small communities – a more efficient and practical solution than large, expensive STPs. He also suggested the application of technologies that are better suited to our conditions. “That can make systems much more efficient. Architects are often the first culprits here, because they have no idea of the technicalities involved in designing STPs, which often makes the design unscientific and defeats the purpose,” he added.

A practical solution to this would be to give the responsibility of an annual maintenance contract (AMC) to the same party delivering the STP. Dr TV Ramachandra, coordinator of Energy and Wetlands Research Group (EWRG) and Convener of Environmental Information System (ENVIS) at Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES) at IISC, pointed to his team's work in rejuvenating the groundwater surrounding Jakkur Lake.

Today, the surrounding groundwater and 300+ borewells have gone from having a high concentration of nitrate in 2005 to one that is now 90% free of such pollutants