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# **Bengaluru: Will the froth at Varthur subside at last?**

DECCAN CHRONICLE.

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Expert panel in surprise visit asks officials to clear debris, encroachments within a week.



📷 File photo of froth coming out of Varthur lake

**Bengaluru:** If all goes well, there could be a solution to the ever-frothing Varthur and Bellandur lakes. But the moot question is when will the government act on the recommendations to ensure that the lakes are free of pollution and contamination.

Chief Secretary Subhash Chandra Khuntia, Additional Chief Secretary Mahendra Jain and other officials inspected the Varthur Lake on Sunday, and directed officials to clear the debris and encroachments within a week.

After hearing the woes of residents living around the lake, Mr Khuntia told the officials to fence off the lake property where rampant dumping is taking place. He said that macrophytes should be cleared and the gradient of the flow at the outlets lessened to bring down frothing and foam.

Members of the Whitefield Rising Lake Team said that some of the water weeds should be left in the lake for farmers to use it as fodder for their cattle. The team pointed to the officials dumping of waste and debris on the lakebed and sides of the lake.

The expert committee, formed by the government to restore

Bellandur and Varthur lakes, has 18 members, and is headed by ACS Mahendra Jain. The committee suggested that aerators should be installed and weeds removed. These solutions will be implemented in a phased manner.

Volunteers from the Lake Team explained the situation to Mr Khuntia and narrated how they met senior officials from various government departments to rejuvenate the dying lake.

Mr Khuntia was also briefed about the bathymetric survey, conducted by scientists led by Prof T.V. Ramachandra of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) with the help of Indian Army (Madras Engineering group). The IISc team found traces of heavy metals above permissible limits in the ground water around the lake.

The Lokayukta and officials from the BDA, LDA, BBMP and Urban Development Department have visited the lake and its surroundings, and an expert committee too has submitted its recommendations, residents said.

They submitted a letter to Mr Khuntia asking him to consider cutting off the flow of sewage from upstream Iblur and Bellandur lakes, which are upstream. "All waste water should be treated locally and then let into the lakes through wetlands (currently most of it are encroached). Further, industrial effluents and sewage should not be allowed to enter lakes through rajakaluves, storm water drains or UGDs. Stringent action should be taken against those dumping debris by the lakeside, wetlands, lakebed, storm water drains, canals and Rajakaluves," the residents said.

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