

Ensure flats in lake catchment area have sewage plants: NGT

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BENGALURU: The National Green Tribunal on Monday ordered the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) to issue a directive to all 99 apartment complexes discharging sewage into Bellandur and Varthur lakes to install modular sewage treatment plants in the available space without posing a threat to structural safety.

The NGT's principal bench was hearing the matter pertaining to the status of the highly polluted Bellandur and Varthur lakes when it passed the interim order based on the state's action plan on reviving the water bodies. Recently, a 30-hour blaze had reduced grass and weeds around parts of Bellandur Lake to cinder.

The bench said a strict vigil be maintained on industrial pollutants or effluents entering Bellandur, Agara and Varthur lakes — part of Koramangala-Challaghatta valley, a natural system that carries excess rainwater away from the city.

Citing the government's claim that macrophytes (dry floating grass and hyacinth) were the cause of the recent blaze, the bench directed physical removal of all such weeds and ordered a compliance report be placed every month before it.

Need action plan to revive Varthur, Agara lakes: NGT

A study report from the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, has been sought on the lifecycle of macrophytes and its biological removal, eradication and de-sedimentation.

The tribunal gave directions that an action plan must be chalked out for the revival of Varthur and Agara lakes. The bench ordered an action plan regarding disposal of solid municipal and other waste be placed before it.

The next hearing of the case is on February 28.

Sridhar Pabbisetty, CEO, Namma Bengaluru Foundation, one of the petitioners in the case, said, "The tribunal on Monday took into consideration the Expert Committee Report on Rejuvenation of Bellandur Lake. So far, the state authorities' efforts to save the lake have been dismal and we hope timely action plan reports to be submitted to the tribunal will result in restoring the lake."