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Heavy Rains Wash Away Bengaluru's Crumbling Infra, Expert Blames Concretisation & Unplanned Growth



The story is the same every year in Bengaluru as unauthorised constructions, blocked drains and extensive traffic jams due to waterlogging expose the dark underbelly of the country's technology hub

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LAST UPDATED: APRIL 15, 2022, 13:04 IST

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ROHINI SWAMY

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Bengaluru recorded 37.7mm rains on Thursday alone, more than double compared to the rains on Wednesday, which measured 12.3mm. (Image for representation/Reuters File)

Heavy rains on Thursday exposed the crumbling and vulnerable infrastructure of Bengaluru as several parts of the city faced waterlogging and many low-lying houses were submerged due to the intensity of the rains and poor drainage.

The story is the same every year as unauthorised constructions, blocked drains and extensive traffic jams due to waterlogging expose the dark underbelly of the country's technology hub.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Bengaluru recorded 37.7mm rains on Thursday alone, more than double compared to the rains on Wednesday, which measured 12.3mm. The weather monitoring department has issued a forecast of 'heavy rain' for three more days.

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike (BBMP) chief Gaurav Gupta, in an emergency meeting, has decided to crack the whip and sent out a stern warning to all officials to immediately attend to complaints of tree falling, traffic jams and waterlogging due to rainwater.

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“I have issued instructions that every call should be attended to immediately. While efforts are being made to smoothen traffic jams that could be caused due to waterlogging, we also expect the zonal control rooms to be ready with appropriate machinery and equipment to address issues like tree falling and waterlogging,” Gupta said. “Any delay or laxity will not be accepted. Failing to comply will lead to action against the officials concerned,” he added.

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Dr TV Ramachandra of the Indian Institute of Science said rapid and indiscriminate growth of the city coupled with unplanned development was the main cause for heavy flooding.

Speaking to News18, he referred to a detailed study that he presented to Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai last month. According to the study titled ‘Frequent Floods in Bangalore: Causes and Remedial Measures’, Bengaluru’s concretised and paved surfaces have increased by 78 per cent and that has led to severe blocking of the drainage system.

“One of the major reasons behind these urban floods is concretisation, narrowing of storm water drains and lack of appropriate drainage maintenance. The narrowing of waterways, blocked sewers, encroachment of floodplains and solid waste have blocked the system. These throw up the water onto the roads, causing further destruction to the city’s infrastructure,” Dr Ramachandra told News18.

The scientist said the Bengaluru floods will continue as long as the government turns a blind eye to it.

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He further explained that the Karnataka chief minister, in his budget, allocated Rs 1,500 crore for drain remodelling. “This simply means concretisation of drains. If you concretise the pavements over the drains, how will the water flow into it? It will flow over the concrete structure, making the entire city flood-prone every time,” Dr Ramachandra said.

The IISC scientist said he was appalled by the way the city development was being done to benefit the contractors and builders.

“Take, for example, the storm water drain near Bellandur and Agaram Lake in South Bengaluru. The drains as supposed to be 80 metres in width, they have reduced it to 20 metres to benefit the builders. On one hand we call Bengaluru the Knowledge and IT capital of the country with top research institutions ready to help with suggestions to solve the problem. But the knowledge that is available is not being used. The CM is an engineer himself and should understand the issue at hand.” he said.

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ROHINI SWAMY *Rohini Swamy, Associate Editor at News18, has been a journalist for nearly two decades in the television and digital space. She covers south India for...* [Read More](#)

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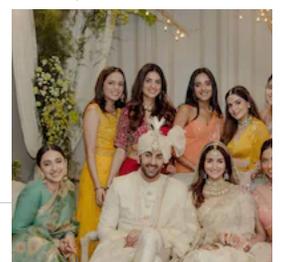
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