

Agencies told to ensure supply of potable water

Lok Adalat conducted for discussing the issue of contaminated water supply

Staff Reporter

BANGALORE: In perhaps the first effort of its kind in the country, the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority (KSLSA) has begun the process of bringing under an umbrella several civic agencies in Bangalore to tackle the menace of water pollution and contaminated water supply.

The authority, which conducted an exclusive Lok Adalat for discussing the issue of contaminated water supply and pollution of water bodies, on Tuesday, cajoled the Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BMP), the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) and the Bangalore Metropolitan Region Development Authority (BMRDA) to take expeditious steps to ensure potable water supply to the residents of Bellandur and some surrounding villages.

Ramachandra Reddy, a resident of Bellandur, had filed a public interest litigation (PIL) petition in 1998 in the

• **BWSSB is discharging untreated water into Bellandur Lake**

• **Water in and around the valleys is contaminated**

Karnataka High Court seeking a direction to the authorities to halt the flow of sewage into the lake.

During an earlier sitting, environmentalist A.N. Yellappa Reddy was asked by the Lok Adalat to inspect the Bellandur lake and file a report. In his report, Mr. Reddy had stated that the BWSSB was discharging untreated water into the lake.

In another report, the BWSSB, which had also been asked to inspect the Vrushabhavati Valley from Mallasandra to Byremangala tank, had said the valley was full of silt.

The KSPCB, in its report, had said the water in and around the valleys is contaminated and being consumed by the villagers.

When the matter came up for hearing, Justice Manju-

nath asked the agencies to come up with a short-term plan to provide safe and clean drinking water to residents of Bellandur.

Mr. Yellappa Reddy said small-scale industries were discharging untreated pollutants and they contained high levels of cadmium and chromium, affecting the nervous and cardiac system.

The BMP Commissioner, K. Jairaj, said a scheme was being implemented to modernise the storm water drains, remove silt and separate sewage from storm water networks.

He said there is indiscriminate dumping of waste and debris by the residents in storm water drains and this is causing pollution of the water bodies. BDA Commissioner Shankarlinge Gowda said water could be supplied to Bellandur under the accelerated water supply scheme by drawing water from unpolluted sources nearby.

Justice Manjunath asked the KSPCB to submit within a month its report and adjourned hearing to December 22.