

## 'Well-maintained' and 'rejuvenated' lakes fare no better

• [K. C. Deepika](#)



A view of Allasandra lake.

*None of them qualified to be clean enough for serving as sources of drinking and bathing water*

Clean and pristine on the outside, polluted and ailing inside; that is the story of some of the city's most popular lakes exposed by the sample classification done by the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB). Despite claims of 'regular maintenance' and 'rejuvenation', none of the lakes qualified to be clean enough for serving as sources of drinking and bathing water. Water even in Sankey tank, Hebbal lake and Jakkur lake was found best fit for wildlife and fisheries.

An earlier study conducted by the Energy and Wetlands Research Group, Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science (IISc.) in 105 lakes had also revealed that 90 per cent of the city's lakes were fed by sewage, and 98 per cent of them were encroached upon.

The reasons remain the same. T.V. Ramachandra from the IISc. Centre for Ecological Sciences said Hebbal lake and Sankey tank still had some amount of untreated sewage flowing into them. In Sankey tank, water from the toilet too was being let into the lake, he said. Apart from this, the lack of adequate rainfall, which is said to dilute the sewage content, had also contributed to the present state of lakes, he added.

"Rejuvenation is not a one-time job. Solid and liquid waste is being dumped into even rejuvenated lakes. This can be stopped only with vigilant citizens' and walkers' groups. As long as there is no sense of belonging, the fate will be the same," he said.

K.B. Koliwad, who led the 11-member committee of the Legislative Assembly to look into encroachment lakes in the city, said the problems of the lakes had to be looked at through a case-by-case basis. "Each lake or tank has its history and characteristic.

Maintenance and upkeep of the lakes have been entrusted with three institutions — Bangalore Development Authority, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike and the Lake Development Authority. Whether it is sufficient or not has to be looked into," he said.

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