

Panel divided over revival of Bellandur lake

Disagreement over desilting lake; no consensus on method to be adopted also

Treated sewage for dry districts

BENGALURU, DHNS: Even as work on weeding Bellandur lake has started, the government has entrusted the minor irrigation department with the task to flow the treated sewage water from Bellandur lake to Kolar and Chikkaballapur.

“Work on this has already started. BWSSB will complete the installation of a 60-MLD STP by the end of April and a 90 MLD STP by July. We are also laying pipelines. Once the STPs are completed and pipelines laid, work on pumping treated water from Bellandur lake to Kolar and Chikkaballapur via Narasapura tank will start. The whole project will be commissioned by 2018,” a department engineer said.

The department will lay 124-km pipelines to supply treated sewage. The project costs Rs 1,340 crore. But, members of the lake expert committee are not happy with the proposal.

“The idea of supplying water to Kolar and Chikkaballapur is to recharge groundwater there. What about Bengaluru? The groundwater level in Bengaluru too has depleted. Treated water should be used to meet the drinking water needs of surrounding areas,” said a member.

Another member said the government could instead create another tank at half the cost, instead of pumping the water to Kolar and Chikkaballapur.



An earthmover removes silt from Bellandur lake at Iblur on Monday. DH PHOTO

Bosky Khanna

BENGALURU: Members of the lake expert committee are divided on desilting Bellandur lake. While some members and government officials say desilting of the lake is required, others think it is a futile exercise.

P N Nayak, engineer member of the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), said desilting the lake was needed and would be undertaken after weed was cleared and aeration was completed.

Siddaiah, former BDA com-

missioner and committee member, said the lake needed desilting and for this, it would have to be drained of all the water. But before that, the government had to identify what would be done with the accumulated silt, whether to send it to brick factories, cement industries or create manure out of it.

A study conducted by Prof T V Ramachandra from Energy and Wetlands Research Group, IISc, last year on Bellandur and Varthur lakes showed that the silt in both the lakes was over 7.6 million cubic metres.

Ramachandra, also a mem-

ber of the committee, said the depth of the lake was not more than two metres as it was desilted 50 years ago.

He, however, says there is no need to dry up the lake to desilt it. “It can be done through wet-dredging technology (where silt is sucked out). Desilting will increase the water-holding capacity of the lake,” he said.

G Vidyasagar, chief executive officer, Karnataka Lake Conservation and Development Authority (KLCD), also said the wet-dredging method was more suitable.

However, Sharachchandra

Lele, committee member and senior fellow at Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, said desilting would be a futile exercise.

“Silt is nothing but untreated organic matter. The government should permanently stop sewage from entering the lake. After nitrates and phosphates are removed, untreated organic matter will be cleaned up naturally,” he said.

Prof Ramaprasad, chief of technical committee, KLCD, and committee member, said desilting of Bellandur lake was not necessary.

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One of the officials from the survey department told that they had earlier carried out a survey of Varthur lake where around 24 acres were found to be encroached.

the lake area. After the survey, the lake will be fenced. Meanwhile, if we find anyone trying to encroach the lake before the survey is completed, we will fine them Rs 5 lakh and hand them over to police,” he added.

24 acres encroached

One of the officials from the survey department told *DH* that they had earlier carried out a survey of Varthur lake where around 24 acres were found to be encroached. “We had even issued notices against the erring individuals. However, it is the duty of the BDA to take stringent action against violators and put an end to encroachment. The encroachment has been taking place for the past two years and Sunday’s incident was

not new,” the official said.

BDA, however, said they were not informed about the survey and encroachment details. And hence could not take any action in the past, they maintained.

The resident who shot the video had stated in the video that around 100 trucks had entered the lake bed on April 22 and the following day. Two JCBs were seen pushing in the mud into the lake and levelling it.

Whitefield Rising (WR), a citizens’ movement that has been campaigning against lake encroachment and a host of civic issues in its survey report has maintained that a buffer zone of 75 metres from Varthur lake has not been maintained and the rajakaluve has been encroached upon.

Weeding begins at Bellandur lake

Lake, from Page 1

“The challenge is to sustain it. Weeds grow back quickly. Another challenge is to remove the stench from the lake,” said Sharachchandra Lele, Senior Fellow at the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment and member of the lake expert committee.

The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board on Monday closed three polluting industries in the vicinity of the Bellandur lake. Board chairman Lakshman said three small-scale silk dyeing units had been told to stop functioning. The area has 488 industries and 159 apartment complexes.

“We have formed a 30-member committee to inspect each and every industry and apartment complex,” he said. Three units were closed on Monday and 10 more will follow suit on Tuesday, he told DH. “We have identified 13 industries, which will have to pay Rs 5 lakh each as penalty,” Lakshman said. The board started identifying polluting industries and apartment complexes following the National Green Tribunal’s order last Wednesday. Lakshman said the closure orders can be revoked. If the industries set up treatment plants and stop polluting the lake, the committee can allow them to open again. The committee has shortlisted 97 water-based industries and 15 apartment complexes to close down and penalise.

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Myriad events mark thespian Rajkumar’s 89th birth anniversary across city

Shivarajkumar pays tribute to father, belts out Appaji’s hit songs

BENGALURU: Faces painted with Rajkumar’s portraits, musical tributes and distribution of cakes – the 89th birth anniversary of the Kannada thespian was celebrated with much fervour at Ravindra Kalakshetra here on Monday.

The Department of Information and Public Relations, which had organised the programme, tried to emphasise on the values that the late actor espoused besides creating an environment of festivities on the occasion.

Rajkumar’s views and ideas were discussed by actors even as artistes who participated in the programme stressed on the morality and social responsibility which were present in the late actor’s movies and songs.

Shivaraj and Puneeth’s tribute Thunderous applause almost drowned ‘Hat-trick Hero’ Shivarajkumar’s voice as he sang popular songs ‘Aadisi nodu beelisi nodu’ and

Google pays tribute through Doodle

Google paid tribute to the late Kannada thespian and cultural icon Rajkumar on his 89th birth anniversary on Monday through a doodle. The Google Doodle showed a young smiling Rajkumar’s larger-than-life image beaming through the silver screen at an audience that watches him in awe. Rajkumar was born as Singanalluru Puttaswamayya Muthuraj on April 24, 1929. Arvind Gowda, who coordinated with Google to create the doodle, said: “It is an incredibly beautiful gesture by Google to pay tribute to Karnataka’s cultural icon. He is also the only south Indian actor to have been given a tribute by Google through a doodle. It is an honour to have helped them in their efforts by connecting them to Rajkumar’s family who helped them to bring their tribute to fruition.”



‘Akashave beelali mele’.

When Puneeth Rajkumar started singing ‘Bombe helu-taite’ from his latest film ‘Rajakumara’, many stood up with tears in their eyes.

Baragur Ramachandrappa recited his poem on the kidnapping of legendary actor by Veerappan.

Daughter performs pooja There were sombre moments

as Parvatamma Rajkumar, Shivarajkumar, Raghavendra Rajkumar, Puneeth Rajkumar and Rajkumar’s sister Nagamma performed pooja at the late actor’s memorial at Kanteerava Studios.

Thousands of fans jostled for space at the venue to get a view of the family.

On the occasion, Kempegowda Nagarika Vedike distributed books for poor chil-



Actors Shivarajkumar and Dwarakeesh garland the samadhi of Rajkumar on his 89th birth anniversary at the Kanteerava Studios on Monday. DH PHOTO

dren at Keshava Shilpa Circle at Kempegowda Nagar. In Domlur, Kannada Geleyara Balaga, Rotary Club (East) and Shanimahatma Swami Temple had jointly organised blood donation camp on the temple premises.

The Chamarajpet Cultural Trust had organised ‘Gana Gandharvanigondou Gana Namana’ programme where Lakshmi Mahesh and troupe sang

popular numbers from Rajkumar films to pay tributes to the actor.

At Kanteerava Studios, singers vied with each other to perform in Rajkumar’s voice.

Karnataka Rakshana Vedike honoured artistes Dingri Nagaraj, Biradar, D Lakshman Nayak, Shantakumar and others.

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Millet mela in city from April 28

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government is organising ‘Organics and Millets 2017,’ a three-day national trade fair from April 28 at Palace Grounds in Bengaluru with an aim of promoting organic food and millets.

Agriculture Minister Krishna Byre Gowda told reporters on Monday that the fair will be a forum for organic farmers and companies selling organic food products to interact with one another and market their products. Retailers including Big Bazaar, Reliance, Metro, ITC and SPAR Hypermarket will take part in the fair, he added.

The government has created 14 organic farmers’ federations to encourage farmers to market their produce. These federations will hold direct talks with the representatives of various retail companies to promote their business. Currently, organic farming is carried out in about 1.85 lakh hectares in the state.

Linking up

‘Duet’ art project seeks to connect strangers from India and UK

Meghana Choukkar

BENGALURU: Take conversations beyond the superficial and find what you share in common with a fellow human in a different country.

Quicksand, a design studio based in Bengaluru, New Delhi and Goa, and Invisible Flock, a UK-based interactive arts studio are carrying out a year-long art project, launched in February, titled ‘Duet’ which anonymously connects two strangers from India and the United Kingdom. Participants in the project use the Duet app to get paired with someone in the other country, and answer one new question every day. Through questions about a place which makes you happy, bad advice you may have received and the last thing you made with your own hands, you slowly get a picture of your partner’s world.

The idea behind the project came to Babitha George of Quicksand and Ben Eaton of



The project takes on three forms – the app, where you connect with strangers, a web platform which visualises the answers, and public art installations in India and in the UK.

Invisible Flock during a conversation they had in 2014. “Duet emerged from our conversations around how despite the seemingly ever-connected nature of technology, we seem to be increasingly disconnect-

ed and isolated. We thought of using questions as cues, which will make you stop and think about things which you, otherwise, do not. You will be able to get a glimpse of your partner’s life but at the same time, you will also look inward and learn something about your life,” Babitha explained.

The creators have consciously chosen not to reveal the identity of the participants. “We wanted people to share a relationship which is not dependent on things like one’s name, gender, where they live or what they do. Even without this information, you can learn a lot about a person through their answers,” Babitha explained. They wanted to create a sense of romance and curiosity, in contrast with the experi-

ence on social media where everything is fast-paced and posts are directed at a large number of people.

The project takes on three forms – the app, where you connect with strangers, a web platform which visualises the answers, and public art installations in India and in the United Kingdom. Their first art installation has already come up in Leeds, United Kingdom, where LED panels have been put up where public can see some of the answers.

The collaboration is funded by Arts Council England and the British Council as part of their year-long celebration of 70th anniversary of Indian independence and UK cultural ties.

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Satellite Township Ring Road proposal revived

BENGALURU, DHNS: To decongest the city and provide better access to Kempegowda International Airport, the State Highway Development Authority has now prepared a plan to have a four-lane toll road.

These roads would link Nelamangala to Devanahalli, Harohalli to Anekal Road, Anekal to Hoskote Road and Hoskote to Devanahalli.

The project is estimated to cost Rs 2,045 crore. Existing small lanes will be widened to four-way roads. The Karnataka

Road Development Corporation Ltd will acquire land.

The proposal would be placed before the Cabinet for approval. Once the project is completed, there will be another road connecting the satellite towns of the city. Vehicles from Hassan-Mangaluru Road, Mysuru Road, Kanakapura Road, Bannerghatta Road, Hosur Road and Hoskote Road can reach the airport without entering the city. Similar ease of access will be available for people in Whitefield as well.

City to observe World Malaria Day today

BENGALURU, DHNS: As part of World Malaria Day under the global theme of ‘End Malaria for Good’, the District Vector-borne Disease Control Office (Bangalore Urban) will organise an awareness programme at the Community Health Centre, Kengeri on Tuesday.

“Bengaluru has seen a sharp decline in the number of malaria cases. All the cases that have been reported have also been indigenous or migratory cases. In 2017, so far, only one indigenous case has been reported,” said Dr Sunanda Reddy, District Malaria Officer.

“We have seen a drastic reduction in the number of malaria cases in the city. In 2014, the number was 16 which declined to 13 in 2015-16 which further reduced to one in 2017 (till March),” said Sunanda.

“We are reaching out to the most vulnerable groups and spreading awareness on maintaining hygiene and identifying potential symptoms of the dis-

‘Report food adulteration’

Now, citizens can report or file a complaint related to food adulteration by street vendors and restaurants by clicking a picture and sending it on 9482196639 through WhatsApp. The sender will get an immediate response and action will be taken against the adulterator after verification by food safety officers. The initiative by FSSAI (Karnataka) aims to curb the problem of food adulteration and prevent the spread of diseases.

ease,” said Dr N Ramesh Babu, Bengaluru Urban District Health Officer.

According to information, 9,382 cases of malaria were reported in the state in 2016 which has come down to 629 in 2017 (up to March).

BBMP to set up ward committees soon

BENGALURU: The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) on Monday informed the High Court of Karnataka it would be constituting ward committees within a month.

Hearing a batch of petitions, a division bench comprising Justices Ashok B Hinchigeri and K S Mudagal questioned the BBMP on delay in setting up ward committees.

Trash collection points

The high court on Monday ordered notice to the BBMP on a PIL seeking directions not to set up a garbage collection point at a park.

The petitioners — residents of Rajajinagar 5th Block — are

aggrieved by the decision of the BBMP to set up a garbage collection point at the intersection of 64th Cross and the service road in their locality.

The residents contended that a portion of the park is being converted into a garbage collection point. The residents have said that the park is located in a residential area and is the only park available for citizens. They said the BBMP is hurriedly erecting a garbage collection point. A division bench comprising Chief Justice S K Mukherjee and Justice P S Dinesh Kumar ordered notice to BBMP and directed posting the matter after vacation.

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