

Lokayukta to inspect Puttenahalli Lake, seeks detailed report

Bosky Khanna

BENGALURU: With the Puttenahalli Lake in Yelahanka shrinking in size due to the flow of sewage inside the lake boundary and presence of manholes in violation of the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA), 1972 and the National Green Tribunal (NGT) rules, the locals and experts are worried about the city's first and only bird conservation reserve. The Lokayukta has sought a detailed report and will also inspect the lake after agitated locals approached it.

Nithyanand Kumar, Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) Chief Engineer, Waste Water Man-



Puttenahalli Lake in Yelahanka. One of the manholes near the waterbody.

agement admitted that since there are private properties abutting the lake boundary, sewage lines and open drains

are inside the lake.

The open sewage line and drain, of 12 feet width, is inside the lake boundary and the



new lake boundary is yet to be drawn. A concrete wetland is also being constructed inside the lake apart from the nine

new and six old manholes in the lake.

K S Sangunni, Yelahanka Puttenahalli Lake and Bird Conservation Reserve Trust Chairman, said, apart from the shrinking lake size, the Trust in a report has also asserted that nothing is being done to stop sewage from entering the lake. Sewage continues to stealthily enter the lake through the manholes.

NGT rules state that lakes cannot be used to install manholes and pipes, but BWSSB has violated it.

Prof Chanakya H N, Centre for Sustainable Technologies, IISc said there is something wrong in implementing the project. BWSSB had agreed to

shift all pipes and lines outside the lake. In fact, putting drains at the edge of the lake is also not safe. The lake is a bio-diversity reserve and is protected.

Harsha Vardhan, Assistant Conservator of Forest, said orders have been issued to the BWSSB to remove all the manholes from the lake. He assured that the lake will be improved once the work is completed.

Retd Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, Avani Kumar Verma, who was instrumental in getting Puttenahalli its tag, said since its a Conservation Reserve, all WPA rules apply. Altering the size of the lake is a violation of the rules.

DH News Service