

'Is govt. right in handing over Puttenahalli bird conservation reserve to BBMP?'

Chief wildlife warden will have to continue to perform his duties, says court

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The Karnataka High Court on Monday directed the State government to justify its decision to hand over the Puttenahalli Lake Bird Conservation Reserve (PLBCR) to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) when the notification of declaring it as conservation reserve under Wildlife (Protection) Act is in force.

The court said that the conservation reserve man-



agement committee, if set up for PLBCR as per Section 36B of the Act, should continue to discharge its duties as per the law and also the chief wildlife warden too will have to continue to perform his duties on conservation re-

serve. A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Abhay Shreenivas Oka and Justice S. Vishwajith Shetty passed the order on a PIL petition filed by Yelahanka Puttenahalli Lake and Boards Conservation Trust.

The trust had questioned the legality of handing over the conservation area to the BBMP in November 2019 and subsequent developments.

Prima facie, the Bench observed that the control of

conservation reserve cannot be handed over to the BBMP as the law mandates that the conservation reserves will have to be managed by the committees set up as per Section 36B of the Act to advise the Chief Wildlife Warden to conserve, manage and maintain the conservation reserve. The State government had issued a notification on April 29, 2015 and declared specified areas of Puttenahalli lake areas a PLBCR.