

NGT takes the BBMP and BWSSB officials to task

Warned the authorities on coercive action for non-compliance

Bengaluru: Dec 11, 2019: The infamous Bellandur Lake which had attracted headlines nationally for catching fire twice in less than five years, is yet to see the light of constructive work of Rejuvenation and Reviving. From Feb 2017, this Suo-moto case is being heard **where Namma Bengaluru Foundation is an impleader**. BBMP, BDA, BWSSB and KSPCB are respondents. For almost 3 years now NGT has given directions to officials at every hearing, most of which are not adhered to.

Principal Bench today pulled up the officers of BBMP, BWSSB and KSPCB saying it is inclined to file criminal cases for dereliction of duty. People must not be suffering because of slothful behavior from officials. The crux of today's hearing revolved around accountability of officers. The tribunal even questioned on what work has been done to address the issue. It further reprimanded that the inaction and lame excuses of unavailability of cost, resources and technical glitches are not justifiable.

Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel chided that Bengaluru has so many lake experts and people are very good but the government is not interested in taking help from them in protecting water bodies. He also expressed unhappiness for delay in building STPs and pulled up the BWSSB chairman Tushar Girinath for seeking two more years of time to build STPs, while the experts said it can be done in 9 months. NGT asked the state government to complete the construction of STPs in nine months to prevent entry of sewage water. By Sep 2020 the work on STPs must be completed, it said.

Mr. Harish Kumar, General Manager, Namma Bengaluru Foundation, responded, "We seek that a particular officer must be accountable for a particular activity in a particular time frame. If the experts say that sewage flow can be stopped in 9 months and BWSSB has asked for 2 more years (by 2022), it only shows the lack of interest and unaccountability of BWSSB in solving this issue. The Accountability needs to be sorted else we will not get things fixed inside a timeframe".

About Namma Bengaluru Foundation:

Namma Bengaluru Foundation is an NGO that works determinedly to Protect Bengaluru and the rights of its citizens and Neighbourhoods. It works thru advocacy, partnership and activism for a better Bengaluru. The foundation acts as a platform for citizens to participate in the city's planning and governance, to fight corruption and ensure accountability of public money and government assets.

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