200-acre Madiwala Lake to get a fresh lease of life

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The brains behind the revival of the Yamuna banks are now working to rejuvenate Madiwala Lake to make it a model biodiversity park in five years.

On the recommendations of the Karnataka Jnana Ayoga (Knowledge Commission), the Kamataka Lake Conservation and Development Authority (KLCDA) will revive the 200-acre lake, K Kasturirangan, scientist and KJA chairman said on Monday.

He was speaking at the workshop - Bring Back the Lakes - organised by KLCDA, Department of Forests, Environment and Ecology, and CI Bengaluru. The workshop was inaugurated by Forest, Environment and Ecology Minister Ramanath Rai.

Kasturirangan added that after a detailed survey of the city’s lakes, the commission chose Madiwala lake and started the rejuvenation in January. C R Babu, ecologist and Delhi University professor, who worked on reviving the Yamuna banks, is guiding the development.

With a fund of Rs 25-28 lakh from the Karnataka government, KLCDA will make Madiwala lake a biodiversity park. Tendering for desilting is under way. State-of-the-art technology from Maharashtra will be used to desilt the lake without draining the water. A herbal garden with native tree species, walkways and interpretation centre will be created. In five years time, the lake will be revived to what was 50 years ago.

In 2008, locals and the forest department had revived Madiwala lake. But because of poor maintenance, it was contaminated again. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had allocated Rs 24.72 crore in the state budget for Madiwala lake.

Additional chief secretary, DFEE, T M Vijay Bhaskar said sewage was the biggest problem for city lakes. Tenders by BWSSB are in the process to install sewage treatment plants in three to four years.

KCLDA CEO Ajai Misra said the body will be a link between lake custodians and people coming forward to revive lakes under corporate social responsibility. A special purpose vehicle will be created for each lake.

Former Karnataka Task Force Chairman V Balasubramaniam said in 10 years, half of Bengaluru will have to be evacuated as no water will be left. A report by Institute of Social and Economic Change states 50% borewell water is contaminated, which makes reviving lakes essential.

The workshop was aimed at reaching out to stakeholders and bringing about a coherent change in the current system. Corporates signed an expression of interest with KLCDA which will act as a single-window agency for lake revival.
Corporate pitch to save city's lakes

- K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj

NEW BEGINNING: Among the five firms that have signed up is Biocon Ltd., which will work to rejuvenate Hebbagodi lake.— File Photo: G.P. Sampath Kumar

**WHO WILL REJUVENATE WHAT**

- **Biocon:** Hebbagodi lake
- **Wipro Limited:** Bommanahalli lake, Maragondanahalli lake
- **Mphasis India:** Mahadevapura lake
- **UB Group:** Kysanayakanahalli lake
- **Sansera Engineering:** Mahaveer Nagar lake

**OTHER PENDING PROPOSALS**

- **Biocon Ltd.** has proposed to rejuvenate Bommasandra and Kammasandra lakes under CSR
- **Infosys Foundation** has proposed to rejuvenate Doddathoguru and Chikkathoguru lakes in Electronics City. The foundation recently adopted Hebbal lake in Mysuru

Five firms sign up to rejuvenate waterbodies; officials to explore more investment options

There may be hope yet for the city's dying lakes, with five corporate firms coming forward to fund the rejuvenation of five different lakes.

The newly formed Karnataka Lake Conservation and Development Authority (KLCDA), which in its earlier avatar as Lake Development Authority had got into the soup for leasing out four lakes, had struck a cord with the corporate sector to conserve and rejuvenate lakes. In response, five firms (see box) signed the expression of interest with KLCDA on Monday.

Ajay Misra, chief executive officer of KLCDA, said the authority would now work with corporate firms and civic agencies to draw up detailed project reports for the works to be taken up in the lakes selected. He clarified that commercial activity, advertisements and charging of entry fee would be strictly prohibited.

Puneeth Bhirani, chief administrative officer of Mphasis, one of the firms that have signed up, said they had wanted to help conserve Mahadevapura lake for many months but did not know whom to approach.

KLCDA, which will be the custodian of the lakes, will henceforth be the single-window clearance agency for communities, corporates and NGOs to work for the city's lakes. On Monday, the Forest Department, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike and the Bangalore Development Authority made presentations on rejuvenation works under way and those yet to be taken up, seeking funds for projects.

Hariprasad Hegde, of the Confederation of Indian Industries-Karnataka Water Taskforce, which had organised the workshop 'Bring Back the Lakes-2016', said the task force would work with KLCDA and publish a list of investment opportunities for the city's lakes in every quarter.