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Panel orders to clear lake encroachments

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Legislature Committee on Local Bodies and Panchayat Raj on Thursday ordered to clear the encroached areas on the Yele Mallappa Shetty and Hulimavu lakes. The panel headed by BJP MLA Araga Jnanendra surveyed the two lakes following the recent breach of the Hulimavu lake and reports of rampant dumping of debris on the buffer zone of the Yele Mallappa Shetty lake.

Though the survey report on both the lakes in 2015-16 had highlighted the encroachments, civic agencies had failed to clear them, prompting the committee to chastise the officials for lack of coordination.

"There are high-rise buildings adjacent to the lakes, that too on the buffer zones. They have violated the norms and encroached on the lakebed," Jnanendra told *DH*, adding that officials have given assurances to clear the encroachments as soon as possible.

Though the police complaint



Araga Jnanendra, panel chairman, along with officials inspect the Yele Mallappa Shetty Lake on Thursday. DH PHOTO/S K DINESH

has been filed three-months ago against those dumping debris on the Yele Mallappa Shetty lakebed, local police are yet to file the FIR.

"Minor irrigation department officials requested them to take legal action against the offenders by providing all the evidence, but the police are yet to act. Police officials have also changed the version (of the incident) in the complaint. This is a serious offence.

"I'll bring this to the notice of the Bangalore Rural SP and ask them to take strict action against the Avalahalli police station," he said.

Fake plantation drive

As the committee's visit was confirmed, minor irrigation officials had planted a few saplings on the lake bed and claimed they had stopped the encroachment.

Noticing this, the committee rapped the officials for fooling them.

The survey department report revealed that the Bangalore Development Authority has been the major encroacher of the Hulimavu lake. The agency has occupied nearly 18 acres and 30 guntas of the lake and developed the residential layout.