

Wetland abuse caused Koramangala flooding

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Bengaluru: It's confirmed. The flooding that one of Bengaluru's prime localities, Koramangala saw during the recent monsoon with boats ferrying people to safety, was more man-made than a result of nature's fury.

A study by scientists of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc.) has blamed the concretisation of the storm water drains leading to the Agara-Bellandur Lake in the area for much of the waterlogging that left people stranded and their homes flooded.

Worse, it says the construction work of the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) in the upcoming Special Economic Zone nearby is also responsible.

The research conducted by scientists TV Ramachandra, Vinay S and Bharath H Aithal in October says the Agara-Bellandur Lake, which once helped retain rain water, in groundwater recharge and bio-remediation, has suffered greatly thanks to the KIADB's unbridled construction.

On a field study along with the officials of KLCDA on May 1, the scientists found that the storm water drain leading to Bellandur lake from the City Market had narrowed to 28.5 meters from its original width of 60 meters, in violation of the guidelines of the National Green Tribunal on maintaining the physical integrity of SWDs and lake buffer zones.

"The concretisation and narrowing of the drains enhanced the flooding in the city on August 15 and 24," the study concludes, claiming that the rajakaluves have been concretised, mainly to help encroachers.

"The rajakaluves have become narrow and concreted. I have said before that if things are not brought under control we will lose the city in the years down the line," warns Mr Ramachandra.