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NGT panel finds Varthur Lake reality different from report



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The pipeline being laid in the Varthur lakebed to pump treated water to Kolar.

The National Green Tribunal-appointed committee on Sunday pulled up engineers from the Minor Irrigation Department and the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) over the laying of pipelines in the Varthur Lake and lakebed.

It was the second consecutive day that the panel members visited Bellandur and Varthur lakes to take stock of the ground reality.



submitted by the government agencies to the tribunal differed from the ground reality.

The visibly upset team took note of all deviations on both the lakes.

NGT questions BDA

Raj Panjwani, senior advocate and chairperson of the committee, questioned the need for a 100-foot-wide road to lay the underground pipeline.

An engineer from the Minor Irrigation Department defended the construction, saying all the material was brought from outside and that no digging had taken place.

Panjwani, along with Prof T V Ramachandra, from the IISc's Centre for Ecological Studies and a member of the committee, demanded where was the material, weighing lakhs of tonnes, brought from and where would it be dumped.

The committee also wanted to know as to why were the lakes handed over to the Minor Irrigation Department.

It also questioned the nature of treatment plants set up in the buffer zone and the government's lethargic attitude in completing it.

It also wanted to know the reason behind releasing the treated water to other districts.

The committee did not believe the officials' explanation that there was no dumping of construction debris (C&D) and municipal solid waste (MSW).

It wanted to know where and how was the trash being disposed of.

The members noted that marshals and the BBMP failed to protect the lakes, especially during the



The committee also noted that the lake had turned toxic due to the dumping of the construction debris and municipal solid waste. The presence of methane and phosphate could cause a fire.

Citizens were also allowed to voice their concerns even though it was not part of the scheduled agenda.

They submitted photographic evidence along with a list of anomalies to the committee.

NGT

Varthur Lake

BDA



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