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## Bellandur Lake fire: Panel members differ on cause

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**BENGALURU:** Members of a commission appointed by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to inspect Bellandur Lake, on Saturday, differed among themselves on the reasons for the cause of the fires around the lake.

The commission inspected Bellandur Lake, the storm water drain (SWD) at ST Bed, Koramangala, the sewage treatment plant (STP) of a private apartment near the lake, and the STP at the Koramangala-Challaghatta valley. The committee now has to assign work to each department to address questions asked in the last NGT hearing.

Environmentalist Yellappa Reddy, one of the members, said the some others differed on the causes of the fire, with the civic agencies of the view that the fires were man-made, while Reddy himself and IISc Professor T V Ramachandra blamed the toxic conditions of the lake. Reddy said, "As inflammable objects enter the lake in the form of sewage or solid waste, they are bound to catch fire."

Karnataka Lake Conservation and Development Authority CEO Seema Garg too admitted that there was some confusion regarding the cause of the fire, and said the commission's observations would be disclosed on Sunday evening.

BDA Commissioner Rakesh Singh said the inspection was carried out for the members of the commission to understand the terms of reference. "This exercise is basically to understand whether the action plan submitted by state govt would achieve the desired objectives."

Other members of the commission include senior advocate Raj Panjwani and Joint Commissioner, SWD, BBMP Sarfaraz Khan. The inspection was assisted by NGO Namma Bengaluru Foundation, with its CEO Sridhar Pabbishetty in the inspection team.

### Spots inspected on Saturday

Koramangala ST Bed Storm Water Drain

Sun City STP (Pvt STP)

Bellandur Lake

Koramangala Challaghatta Valley STP

Scheduled for Sunday

Varthur lake

Agara lake

Ads by Kiosked

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TAGS   National Green Tribunal   Bellandur Lake fire

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### **What the Commission has to inspect**

- Records of all fire incidents in lake till April 10, 2018.
- Size of lakes 25 years ago compared to now
- The extent of the lake covered by macrophytes
- Rate of removal of macrophytes, hydrophytes.
- Extent of sewage being dumped in lakes.
- Extent of silt and other deposits and their depth.
- Quantity of Municipal Solid Waste being dumped in and around lakes.
- Extent of availability of treatment plants around lakes.
- Whether apartment complexes around lakes have obtained Occupancy Certificate

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