

GREEN COLLARS IN THANE

Lakes Will Be Conserved, Rejuvenated And Beautified. TMC Has Already Started The Project, Finds Out Sudeshna Chatterjee

The Thane Municipal Corporation have decided for conservation and rejuvenation of twelve lakes as per the commissioner's directive, says its PRO, Sandeep Malvi. "The work for the project has already started with Turpheapada," informs Malvi. The debris around the water body is cleaned up, the silt content is dry dredged so that the water holding capacity increase, explains the architect of the project Pallavi Latkar.

Of the twelve lakes, 5 are in Ghodbunder. These are Turpheapada, Kasarvadavali, Kavesar (Waghbil), Ovala and Naar. The rest are Diagher (Diagher village), Diva Lake (near Diva station) and Khardi, Diva road, Phadkepada, near engineering college and Desai in Kausa, Khidkali and Mumbreshwar in Mumbra. "This year, at least six lakes will be rejuvenated and beautified. These include - Turpheapada, Kasarvadavali, Khardi, Phadkepada, Desai and Mumbreshwar," informs Malvi.

Architect Latkar observes, "How the revival package of the lakes will vary because of their different hydrogeological context. For example Kasarvadavali lake has alluvial soil. So, the water retention capacity of the lake will depend on the water table of the surrounding area and hence employing rainwater harvesting technique will be looked into."

But, first thing first. The entire project will be overseen by the pollution control department under the guidance of city engineer K D Lalla and its officer Manisha M Pradhan. First, as is seen in Turpheapada, there will be removal of garbage, plastics and water hyacinths from the lakes. Instead of constructing reinforced concrete wall, bund walls are to be made around the lake. This automatically brings up the water level as it allows seepage of water unlike the concrete walls.

So, throughout the year, lake will get some water to replenish itself. Then certain types of plants will be introduced to the lake water that will clean the water, thanks to the microorgan-

isms present in the plants, thereby giving an image of a green collar around the lake. There will be plantation of trees around the lake to give it a green fencing. It will stop erosion of soil as well as loss of evaporation. There will be another outer fencing with barbed wires, decked up in bougainvilleas.

Wherever space will permit, there will be wooden chairs. Beside reviving and beautifying lakes, another green friendly service will be putting up attractive signages to thwart devotees from throwing nirmalyas (flowers and leaves used in pujas) into the lake that in turn pollutes the water. Instead nirmalyas will be instructed to be thrown at particular spots where nirmalya kalash will be kept. The nirmalyas so collected will then be translated into compost. These composts would be used up in the garden to be developed around the lakes. People are also seen to be dumping biscuits, breads and other such stuff into the lakes. They will be urged not to treat the lake as garbage bin. Penalties will be levied against the offenders.

During Ganesh festival in September, people will be urged not to use idols made of Plaster of Paris (PoP), as it does not dissolve in water and also pollutes the lake. "We are developing Compact Discs (CDs) on Know your Lake to be distributed to schools and colleges. These CDs will feature not only the history and geography of the concerned lake but also educate teachers and students on how lake water gets polluted and how to protect the water quality. There will be street plays too focusing on similar issues. Over the years, when people will see continued green collars in the lake even during scorching summer, hopefully our efforts will be appreciated. The lakes will be open to public for restricted hours and security guards will be appointed to keep miscreants at bay," informs Malvi.