

3

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23

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Telangana failed to protect lakes: CAG report

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HYDERABAD: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) rapped the state government for failing to take measures to protect the lakes in the Hyderabad Metropolitan Region (HMR) for the past five years. This has resulted in deteriorating quality of water, foaming, formation of weed and silt in the lakes, the report said.

KEY FINDINGS OF REPORT

SELECTIVE WORK

Selection of lakes based on assembly constituencies under Mission Kakatiya, resulted in selection without taking into consideration priority along a chain of lakes

ERRING IN FUNDS

HMADA did not spend any amount on conservation and protection of lakes, except an amount of ₹12.62 crore on survey of lakes during last five years (2013-18)

Forwarding of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) by the state government without ensuring accuracy of estimates resulted in non approval of DPRs by Govt for getting funds under National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems (NPCA)



ENCROACHMENTS CONTINUE

Continuous encroachments in the catchment, buffer area and the FTL of lakes coupled with inaction on the part of the revenue department to remove them results in deterioration of lake health and threatened the very existence of the lake

Encroachments were also found in lakes' FTL and buffer areas that resulted in reduction in the lake areas and change in topography of catchment areas

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Action should be initiated to evict encroachers and reclaim the encroached portion of land belonging to lakes
- Effective measures should be initiated to prevent flow of sewage into the lakes or to ensure its treatment before it flows into the lakes

Though the state government has been claiming that it is committed to the development of lakes and had spent several hundred crores for lakes' development, in its compliance audit report on Protection and Conservation of Lakes in Hyderabad Metropolitan Area, the CAG found that the basic work — survey of lakes — was still incomplete.

Only 2% of 164 lakes were notified as of June, 2018, even after giving the work to consultant and spending about Rs 12 crore. The report said many lakes were encroached openly by vendors and grabbers and efforts should be made to evict them.

The report pointed out that even in the case of notified lakes, the survey number of hill tank levels (HTL) and buffer zones were not notified in the gazette.

"The notified 3,132 lakes list was not comprehensive and excluded 146 lakes. Final notification of lakes was delayed. Even in the lakes that were finally notified and were supported by members of Irrigation department, it was noticed that the HTL notified was less than that in the field notes by 120 acres," the audit report pointed out.

Para No. 3.1 of AR 2017-18

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Durgam Cheruvu shrank due to HUDA, GHMC

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 26

The erstwhile HUDA and the GHMC are responsible for the shrinkage of the Durgam Cheruvu in Jubilee Hills, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has said.

According to a CAG report, the lake which was notified under the Kukatpally Zonal Development Plan in April 1986, had, over a period, seen "buildings come up in and around the lake area, with the layouts being duly approved by HUDA. Three of such approved six layouts were cancelled after the flash floods in 2000."

The CAG said that HUDA did not take any decision on cancellation of the remaining three layouts. An area of 156.16 acres had been demarcated as the full tank level of the lake in 2005 by the irrigation department.

Of this, the revenue department found in September 2010, that 31.16 acres had been commercially developed. As per the lake memoir, the bund of the lake was 213 metres.

A ring bund around the lake was later constructed by GHMC, which further reduced the full tank level of Durgam Cheruvu. A cycling

● **THE CAG** said that HUDA did not take any decision on cancellation of the remaining three layouts. An area of 156.16 acres had been demarcated as the full tank level of the lake in 2005 by the irrigation department.

track and walking track, laid at a cost of ₹48 lakh by a corporate body in 2017, only added to the constriction of the lake. Though the lake protection committee (LPC) instructed the GHMC in September 2013 to remove the ring bund, it was not implemented.

"The reasons for non-implementation of the LPC decision were not on record. Construction of permanent structures within the lake, especially in the context of non-finalisation of lake boundaries and encroachments in the FTL and buffer area, would result in permanent reduction of FTL area," the report said.

Historically, the Durgam Cheruvu at Raidurg in Krishna basin, was a source of water supply to the Golconda fort during the Qutub Shahi rule. The lake, part of a chain of lakes, was restored in 1970.

Water Board cooked up supply figures: CAG

Not fixing meters causes Board ₹1,209 crore loss

MADDY DEEKSHITH

I DC

HYDERABAD, MARCH 26

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWS&SB), supposed to supply 150 litre per person per day has been supplying only an average of 71 litres in the city. By not fixing meters, the Board suffered a revenue loss ₹1,209 crore. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in a report said analysis of the monthly water lifted from source showed that water available for supply to the HMWS&SB area ranged from 109.69 to 118.19 litres per person per day during 2013-18.

The actual supply of water, as reflected in the monthly bills of domestic customers, ranged from 66 to 71 litres during 2013-2018.

The CAG said the difference between gross availability per person (based on quantity lifted) and actual supply per domestic connection (based on monthly bills) is due to water losses during transmission and distribution and water supplied beyond the Board's jurisdiction and to other consumers.

An analysis of the data furnished by the HMWS&SB revealed that the Board assessed water supply at 120-140 litres per person a day by using faulty methods.

Lack of coordination costs Board ₹5.17 cr

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 26

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) stated that lack of coordination between the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWS&SB) and TS Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TSSPDCL) has resulted overspending of ₹5.17 crore.

The Water Board, the CAG said, accorded administrative sanction in August 2012 to Phase

III of the Krishna Drinking Water Supply Project costing ₹1,670 crore to bring water to Hyderabad. It was commissioned in December 2015.

Audit scrutiny showed that after receiving administrative sanction, the Water Board did not immediately inform the power utility. In March 2013, the TSSPDCL, unaware of the sanction of water pipeline, laid an underground power cable on the same route at a cost of ₹5.58 crore. The power cable got

damaged in January 2014 during digging of trial pits for laying the pipeline. A joint inspection by the Water Board and TSSPDCL found in December 2014 that it would not be possible to accommodate the power cable and water pipeline in a 6.3-km stretch from the P.V. Narasimha Rao Expressway Pillar 117 (Karwan substation) to Pillar 293 (Sivarampally). The Water Board requested the TSSPDCL to reroute the new cable and paid the cost of the exercise.

● **WATER LOSSES** at 39% were added to the water distributed and divided by the population to arrive at per capita consumption. Surprisingly, the board initiated the meter fixing project in 2018 without revealing the CAG report.

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82% CONSUMERS IN HYDERABAD DO NOT HAVE WATER METERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 26

Eighty-two per cent city consumers do not have water meters, and that is a major challenge in measuring the actual amount of water consumed, the CAG has said in a report, covering the years 2013-18 presented in the Assembly on Friday.

To be able to measure the quantity of water used by individual units, the state government

has since the last three years made installing of the meter mandatory for residential and bulk connections in gated communities and commercial zones.

This would help to understand the actual number of unaccounted customers and ascertain those who are drawing water illegally in the supply chain. The new scheme offering 20,000 litres free makes installation of water meters mandatory.