Wetlands News Monitor

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News brief on Wetland Birds, Fishing Cat, Olive Ridley Turtles, Smooth-coated Otter, Wetland restoration, Activities

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Reports on Wetland Birds

Migrating birds fly faster and put more effort into staying on course in spring than in fall, racing to arrive to their breeding grounds as soon as possible to get an edge in rising the next generation. Researchers found that the birds speed up during spring because arriving late to their breeding grounds can affect their reproductive success. Past studies have shown that migrants take shorter breaks in spring, but it is harder to tell whether they also move faster in the air. Researchers at the University of Oklahoma in the US used high-tech weather surveillance radars and found that birds did indeed fly faster in spring and compensated more for crosswinds that could blow them off course.

Kyle Horton of Oklahoma stated that many migration studies look at a few individuals, maybe on the scale of hundreds, but with radar they are documenting the behaviours of millions of individuals on a given night. He added that when flight behaviour is seen, it results that are regionally or seasonally different, it is quite compelling and hopes birds' ability to adjust their migratory behaviour for different conditions will buffer them against the effects climate change, which may cause large-scale shifts in wind intensity.

Painted storks

Source: The Times of India Dt.: October 24, 2016

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A flock of flamingos was sighted at Achankulam near Sulur, Coimbatore. While a family of four flamingos, including two adults and two younger ones, were spotted there. The bird watchers said they could spot three of the birds. They said that not many of the watchers were lucky to click the migratory bird as these were perched on a tree at a distance from the bund. They could have a look at the flamingos using binoculars. President of Environment Conservation Group R. Mohammed Saleem said the family could have landed here as the younger birds could have got tired. He said that the flamingos are coming to lakes near Sulur over the last four years. Gujarat is the breeding ground for these birds and they usually spend less than a week for a break during their migratory season, which is between October and January and mooted a study to find the reason for migratory birds taking a diversion here.

Suspected bird flu wipes out all painted storks at Gwalior zoo. With this, the entire population of painted storks numbering 24 at the civic-run zoo has been wiped out. Gwalior Municipal Corporation commissionerAnay Dwivedi reported that all the painted storks were dead and the remaining 300-odd birds of other species were in good health and the zoo was being disinfected. Three falcons which shared the enclosure with the painted storks too were fine though they were quarantined after samples of dead painted storks tested positive for H5N8 virus. Bodies of dead birds were disposed of with utmost care. The zoo was closed after H5N8 virus infection among the painted storks was confirmed. Madhya Pradesh Animal Husbandry Director Dr R K Rokde said there was no report of bird deaths from elsewhere in the state. According to 2012 census, MP had a population of 119 lakh domestic fowls. Dr Rokde said the state had 400-odd private poultry farms and nine government-run ones. A hen had died of bird flu in Burhanpur district of the state in February 2006. Recently, the National Zoological Park in Delhi was shut down temporarily amid bird flu scare following the death of some birds.

Source:

- *http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Migrating-birds-travel-faster-in-spring-Study/articleshow/54062889.cms*
- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/flamingos-take-fancy-to-this-lake/article9259860.ece*

- *http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Suspected-bird-flu-wipes-out-all-painted-storks-at-Gwalior-zoo/articleshow/55034059.cms*

Brief News on Fishing Cat

The Wildlife Management authorities have launched a drive against poaching of the Fishing Cat, which is classified as 'endangered' by the International Union of Conservation of Nature, in the Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS). Recently, the Wildlife Management Division, Eluru, identified presence of several Fishing Cats (*Prionailurus viverrinus*) during their study through camera traps. Special hoardings have been put up across the sanctuary to drive home the message among the local communities, tourists and poachers and also to highlight the efforts being made by international agencies. The KWS spreads across the Krishna and Guntur districts and is said to be one of the rarest eco regions of the world.

"Poaching and catching the Fishing Cat is a crime and any such activity will attract punishment under the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972," warn the hoardings. Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife) In-Charge, Eluru, N. Nageswara Rao reported that their campaign on conservation of the Fishing Cat is aimed at different categories of people. The hoardings mainly serve the purpose of highlighting the presence of the Fishing Cat in the sanctuary, apart from appealing to the local communities to join in conservation of the endangered species. He added that the number of tourists visiting the KWL and Hamsaladeevi beach has dramatically increased since pushkarams. The wildlife authorities are engaged in increasing the mangrove forest cover in the sanctuary under the 'Compensatory Afforestation (Bio-diversity) Fund. At least 10 hectares of mangrove cover will be developed in the Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary. Mangrove forest cover is the prime source for the survival of the Fishing Cat.

Source:

- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-andhrapradesh/on-a-mission-to-save-the-fishing-cat/article9213618.ece*

Brief News on Olive Ridley Turtles

Sea erosion on Ganjam district coast of Odisha, including at mass nesting site of endangered Olive ridley turtles near Rushikulya rookery, has started to worry the inhabitants of the coast and environmental activists. Demands are on for proper geomorphologic study of the sea erosion phenomenon as the impact of erosion is on the rise every year. During the past few weeks, sea waves are showing intense corrosive action. Portions of a road and some houses have been washed away by the sea waves at Rameyapatna. The process of rehabilitation of this village at a safe place is already on.

According to Chikiti tehsildar Sangram Panda, this phenomenon of increased sea erosion needs proper scientific study for which he has written to the authorities. Few years ago similar sea erosion had compelled administration to start the rehabilitation process of inhabitants of Podampeta another village of marine fishermen. But threat of sea erosion to the coastline near Rushikulya river mouth, where Olive ridley turtles come to nest every year, is a worry for wildlife and environmental activists. More than 2.5 kilometre stretch of beach adjacent to north of Rushikulya rookery is a major nesting site of these endangered marine turtles on Indian coastline.

According Rabindranath Sahu of Ruhsikulya Sea Turtle Protection Committee (RSTPC), in the past erosion and deposition was a regular phenomenon in this region but the width of the beach where Olive ridleys were nesting was not getting changed. Sea erosion was starting to occur with the start of the monsoons from July and August but the sea was again staring the deposition process at this beach from October and the width of the coastline was getting restored by December so that it was ready to welcome mother Olive ridleys for nesting. But since 2007, the rate of deposition by the sea has decreased in comparison to erosion. This year erosion is continuing even in October. Out of six kilometre stretch of beach of mass nesting of turtles, now over two kilometre stretch remains completely eroded, alleged Mr. Sahu.

Bivash Pandav of the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), who has studied process of mass nesting of Olive ridleys at Rushikulya rookery coast for several years, said decrease in width of the coast due to sea erosion would surely affect mass nesting of Olive ridleys. In 2016, Olive

ridleys for some yet to be determined reasons did not prefer to have mass nesting at this coast although lakhs of them came over to this region for mating. According to Mr. Pandav, it was high time for expert study of sea erosion on Ganjam coast by experts of hydrology and geomorphology. He stated that it is not for Olive ridleys only but for the future safety of the human populace living on this coast. Environmental activist Prafulla Samantra also demanded for similar study and precautionary measures. He wanted this study to take into account issues and impacts of global warming and climatic changes during this study.

A view of the nesting beach near Podampeta in Ganjam district

Source: The Hindu Dt.: October 20, 2016

Source: *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-otherstates/sea-erosion-a-threat-to-nesting-sites-of-olive-ridley-turtles/article9242843.ece*

News on Smooth-coated Otter

Smooth-coated otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*) was sighted for the first time in the mangrove forest adjacent to the Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS) in Krishna district. In all, seven otters including a family of four, were found in a playful mood and the rest were photographed while preying on the fish in the brackish waters. Until now, there was no sighting of the otter in the KWS to document, according to the Wildlife Division of the Forest Department, Eluru. The forest authorities with the support of a local wetland researcher A. Venkata Appa Rao have documented the presence of the Smooth-coated otter in the mangrove forests and brackish water channels in Eelachetladibba and Lankevennedibba and other areas outside the KWS. In the videos screened to The Hindu, the otters were seen preying on fish, resting on the sand banks, swimming in the brackish waters, offering a glimpse of their behaviour at different places.

The smooth-coated otter that was sighted in mangrove forest in Krishna district

Source: The Hindu Dt.: October 22, 2016

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), conservation status of the Smooth-coasted Otter, distributed throughout South Asia and South East Asia is, 'vulnerable.' Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife) N. Nageswara Rao said that the presence of the otter is a key indicator for rise of the mangrove cover and they have recorded the presence of the otter in the mangroves of Krishna district, particularly in Nagayalanka mandal in early October.

The otter lives in rivers, lakes, peat swamp forests, mangroves and estuaries. It uses swamps as natal den sites and nursery during early winter, the breeding season.

Source: *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-andhrapradesh/smoothcoated-otter-sighted-in-krishna-mangrove/article9253373.ece*

Report on Wetland Events

International Coastal Clean-up is a worldwide event held on the third Saturday of September every year by the Ocean Conservancy, US, to save beaches from human marauding. The Indian Maritime Foundation is the national coordinator for this activity in India. Chennaiites are expected to converge at Marina Beach and be part of International Coastal Clean-Up initiative that has been gathering greater number of participants collecting larger tonnage of beach waste every year. Retired admiral K.R. Srinivasan, vice president of the Chennai chapter of the Indian Maritime Foundation reported that they had 7,800 dedicated volunteers walking down 280 km of beach with its human habitation in Tamil Nadu and they collected 38.7 tonnes of garbage for disposal. The southern coastline consists of 350 km of human inhabited beaches.

Indian Coast Guard station in coordination with VOC Port Trust, conducted an awareness campaign at the New Harbour Beach in the wake of 'International Coastal Clean-up Day'. Under the initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme, the 'International Coastal Clean-up Day' is observed on the third Saturday of September every year to disseminate awareness on the importance of keeping the beaches clean and to make the seashore pollution-free. Hence, the Coast Guard personnel and their families along with personnel from VOC Port, Central Industrial Security Force, Coastal Security Group, NSS volunteers, NCC cadets and Thoothukudi Corporation cleaned the beach.

More than 500 persons participated in the exercise and removed degradable and non-degradable wastes discarded along the beach. This cleaning drive was also utilised to educate the students and local community to become part of the marine debris management for maintaining clean marine environment. Students of V.V. College of Engineering, Thisaiyanvilai, led by

principal P. Padmanabhan and director I. Sundarapandi, cleaned the Kulasekarapattinam beach as the coastal hamlet housing Sri Mutharamman Temple would attract thousands of devotees during the Puja festival. Over 60 students of the college collected discarded plastic bottles, degradable and non-degradable waste from the beach. Volunteers of Holy Cross Home Science College in Thoothukudi cleaned the Tharuvai Grounds as part of 'Swaach Bharat Abhiyan'.

Coast Guard Personnel collecting plastic waste at New Harbour beach in Thoothukudi

Source: The Hindu Dt.: September 18, 2016

The Singanallur Lake played host to a birding session organised by Environment Conservation Group (ECG) to commemorate Wildlife Week celebrations. Mohammed Saleem, President of ECG, spoke on the importance of birds and different kind of species. Participants spotted different types of birds such as painted stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*), Spot-billed Pelican (*Pelecanus philippensis*) and black-headed ibis or Oriental White Ibis (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*). Other birds spotted were Little Cormorant, Little Egret, Greater Egret, Eurasian Spoonbill, Common Sandpiper, Black Crowned Night Heron, Pond Heron, Grey Heron,

Purple Heron, Purple Swamp Hen, White Breasted Swamphen, Glossy Ibis, Common Coot, Rose-ringed parakeet, White-breasted Kingfisher, Black-rumped Woodpecker and Little Grebe.

Coimbatore Corporation, Siruthuli, and a few other organisations have come together to clean Valankulam tank before the North East Monsoon. According to sources, the corporation had begun removing debris from the west end of the tank, which had been compartmentalised into three sections. The work begun a couple of days ago after environment activists and others pointed to indiscriminate debris dumping into the tank. Siruthuli's managing trustee Vanitha Mohan said that the task before the team was to remove the waste and excavate the earth from the tank to restore as much of its original water holding capacity as possible. The tank had been estimated to hold 27.75 million cubic feet of water. But now that had been reduced to around 15 million cubic feet by railway line, link road, Sungam-Ukkadam Bypass Road, and encroachments by both government and private establishments. The corporation was removing the debris from the Chinna Kulam and from near the Highways Colony and taking it to the Sewage Farm in Ukkadam. In the coming days, the corporation would deploy more machinery to remove as much waste as possible. Simultaneously, the Siruthuli and other organisations would involve more machinery to excavate as much earth as possible to increase the tank's storage, the sources said. The target had been set at five lakh metre cube of earth. As part of the cleaning operation, the Valankulam tank's surplus weir and its outlet channel were being kept ready to let out surplus water it gets. Valankulam gets water that flows as surplus from the Big Tank and through inlet channels from near the government hospital, Big Bazaar Street and Good Shed Road and Vincent Street.

To create awareness among the school students on the need to conserve water, a painting competition was held at the Panchayat Union Middle School in Kannanderi, Sankari Taluk, Salem. The painting contest was conducted by the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation of Government of India for students of Classes 6, 7 and 8. The topic for the contest held at school, State and national-level was 'Save water-Save Life'. The objective was to create widespread awareness among the students and sensitise them to the issues of water and the need for conserving it. All the schools in the district were asked to conduct competitions and select best three paintings and send it for the State-level competition. As many as 55 students of the three classes actively participated in the competition. S. Balasubramaniam,

a class 8 student, came first. Headmaster K. Chandrasekar, Eco Club coordinator R. Jeyakumar and teachers appreciated the participants.

Participants at the painting competition organised at the Panchayat Union Middle School in Kannanderi, Sankari Taluk, Salem

Source: The Hindu Dt.: October 20, 2016

Members of the non-government organisation Ver, along with school and college students and members of society, cleaned the Kovaipudur tank at Coimbatore. According to P. Santhosh Kumar, secretary of Ver, the volunteers began the cleaning operation around 7 a.m. By then, around 350 people had reported at the desk. The Ver members had divided the tank area into six zones for cleaning purpose and began working on one of those. The volunteers went about collecting plastic and other non-degradable waste in the earmarked area and then stored it

in bags, which the organisation would send to the Coimbatore Corporation's dump yard in Vellalore. By the time they winded up the operation around 10 a.m., the volunteers had collected around 50 bags, each of which could easily weigh around 10 kg. A release issued by Ver also said that the organisation had deployed earth movers to remove the bushes. The volunteers would continue cleaning the tank for at least six months until they covered the entire tank, the release added.

Volunteers cleaning Kovaipudur tank in Coimbatore in an initiative by Ver organization

Source: The Hindu Dt.: October 24, 2016

Source:

- *http://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/current-affairs/160916/chennaiites-to-gather-at-marina-for-clean-up.html*
- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/international-coastal-cleanup-day-observed/article9120565.ece*

- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/birding-session-marks-wildlife-week-celebrations/article9203135.ece*
- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/valankulam-tank-to-be-cleaned/article9236779.ece*
- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/students-paint-ideas-for-water-conservation/article9242395.ece*
- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/nature-enthusiasts-clean-tank/article9259874.ece*

Wetland Restoration

The urgent need for people to organise themselves to save waterbodies was emphasised by experts at a development dialogue organised as part of its 20th Foundation Day celebration by Dhan Foundation. Focussing on the shifting geographies of urbanisation all over the world, Jayaraj Sundaresan of Indian Institute of Human Settlements said 90 per cent of world's urban population growth was taking place in developing countries since 2007 and India would have about 590 million people living in cities by 2030. This would necessitate creation of 700 to 900 million square feet of new commercial and residential space, the size of Chicago, and 2.5 billion square feet of roads and other infrastructure every year. He also pointed to the fading of the line dividing urban and rural areas and said that in urban and human development geography, the 'urban' was not just located in the city. It was not advisable to consider the urban and rural as separate geographies as they were connected ones. Dr. Jayaraj said new solutions were required to shape this rapid urbanisation.

Looking at urban floods as a significant experience in the 21st century, he said new cities were getting added to the flood map in India. Urban flooding was a result of people's actions on urban development. While emphasising that governance of lakes did not exist in isolation from the political relations forged in everyday socio-political world, he pointed out that people from diverse social and political backgrounds had become actively engaged in reclaiming the governance of lakes of Bengaluru. These activist-networks had been formed out of the realisation

that court orders, government reports, programmes and directives alone could not ensure protection of lakes without active and public struggle of ordinary citizens. He opined that future water trajectories in places such as Madurai would depend on the collective capacity for struggle against actions and decisions that produced the 'killing waters.'

Expressing concern over growth of hospitals in Madurai, which is starved of industries, S. Rajamohan, Managing Director, Enviro Care India, said only 30 per cent of waste water was treated in the city and the rest was allowed to stagnate in open spaces. This led to mosquito breeding and resultant water-borne diseases. The atmospheric temperature, even in a pre-monsoon month, was higher than normal and the evaporation rate stood at 4.5 mm per day. This was bound to go up in the coming years, resulting in fast depletion of groundwater. It was regrettable that no public effort had been made to preserve waterbodies in Madurai, whose average annual rainfall was more than that of Coimbatore. He said that people could not blame the government or civic body for the sorry state of affairs but realise their responsibility as citizens. The need of the hour was collective action to protect the waterbodies in Madurai.

The Wayanad District Tourism Promotion Council (DTPC), with the technical assistance of the Centre for Water Resources Development and Management (CWRDM), Kozhikode, is gearing up to take steps to conserve Pookode Lake, the second largest freshwater lake in the State. Unrestricted anthropogenic activities, including tourism, accumulation of sediments owing to soil erosion, and uncontrolled growth of water weeds have sounded the death knell of the lake, a major tourism destination in the district. A large part of the 5.172-hectare lake has turned into lush green grassland due to soil erosion caused by uncontrolled construction and farming activities on its shores.

P. M. Ratheesh Babu, Manager, DTPC reported that the DTPC signed a memorandum of understanding with the CWRDM recently to conduct a comprehensive study on various threats being faced by the lake and possible measure to overcome. The one-year project envisages to study the water quality and siltation rate in the lake, causes of weed growth and measures to tackle it, assess carrying capacity of the lake and impacts of an aqua park functioning on the lake, performance of the water inflow gate of the lake and measures to improve the environmental quality and classification of flora and fauna in the site. He added that the DTPC

has earmarked Rs.7.5 lakh for the purpose and the study would be completed in a year and would take measures as per the recommendation of the CWRDM.

A recent study by the Ecology Department of the French Institute of Pondicherry showed that the maximum depth of the lake had come down to 6.5 m from the 12 m nearly four decades ago. The study revealed that the lake is dying mainly due to anthropogenic activities, eutrophication (a process where waterbodies receive excess nutrients that stimulate excessive plant growth) and accumulation of sediments owing to soil erosion. According to biologists the lake is the habitat of many endemic and critically endangered fish species, including *Puntius pookodensis* (Pookode Barb). The lakeshore is also a major habitat of nearly 70 species of birds, and nearly 60 species of odonate.

A grass-covered portion of Pookode Lake in Kalpetta.

Source: The Hindu Dt.: October 15, 2016

Source:

- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/call-for-collective-action-to-save-waterbodies/article9178096.ece*
- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-kerala/dtpc-plans-to-protect-pookode-lake/article9222693.ece*

News on Wetland Pollution

Goa Tourism Department directed immediate cleaning of sea shores after a number of Ganesh idols immersed in sea by devotees washed ashore. Hundreds of idols were immersed at various inland water bodies and at sea shores by those devotees who celebrate the Ganesh festival for two days. The number of immersions will go up on conclusion of five days, when most of the devotees bid adieu to their beloved deity.

Immersed Ganesh idols floating in the sea

Source: The Hindu Dt.: September 07, 2016

Tourism minister Dilip Parulekar reported that several Lord Ganesh idols were seen floating on various sea shores, including Miramar, due to which the department has asked the beach cleaning contractors to clean up the shores as soon as possible. He said contractors have been instructed to keep the shores clean, as "seeing a defaced idol could hurt religious sentiments." While those idols made from clay dissolved immediately in water, those made from plaster of paris (PoP) often wash back to shores. State Environment Ministry had formed a group of law enforcement agencies to put a tab on bringing PoP idols to the coastal state.

Water quality of river Ganga shows the presence of bacterial contamination besides traces of pollutants like heavy metals and pesticides, says the apex pollution monitoring body CPCB. In a detailed report covering various aspects of contamination in the river, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has informed the National Green Tribunal that the Ganga, spanning a distance of 543 km between Haridwar and Kanpur, was affected by 1,072 seriously polluting industries which are releasing heavy metals and pesticides. Before many years/centuries, the river was not blocked for any purpose and due to limited habitation on the bank of the river, hardly there was disposal of any waste into the river. Now, the River Ganga is blocked/dammed at many places (upper Himalayan stretches and on the plains such as Haridwar, Bijnor, Narora and Kanpur) and water has been diverted for various uses. As a result, the water quality and ecological sanctity is threatened. CPCB in the report filed in pursuance to the NGT's stated that water quality of River Ganga is showing presence of bacterial contamination besides reporting of presence of trace pollutants like heavy metals and pesticides in some of the studies. At present, 823.1 million litres per day (MLD) of untreated sewage and 212.42 MLD of industrial effluent flows into the river while three of the four monitored Sewage Treatment Plants (STP) were non-compliant with the set standards.

With regard to Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) by industries, CPCB said it has already directed them to achieve ZLD in distillery, tannery and textile units as it was mandatory that pollutants like chromium, total dissolved solid and other chemicals are separated before they are disposed of. All the industries discharging industrial effluents should transmit online data of their effluent quality on uninterrupted basis to CPCB and SPCBs. These industries should also submit fortnightly data of effluent quality based on samples collected manually and getting it analysed through laboratory recognised under Environment Protection Act.

Continuing effluent discharge into River Noyyal worried farmers. There looks to be no reprieve for River Noyyal from pollution with industrial effluents still finding its way into the watercourse in large quantities especially when the skies open up. This was happening despite the existence of the Madras High Court order asking the textile industry in Tirupur cluster to ensure 'zero liquid discharge' (ZLD) norms in the effluent treatment process. In the River Noyyal there were extremely large quantities of foamy effluents that meandering through the centre of Tirupur knitwear cluster causing concern to farming community.

Effluents discharged indiscriminately in Tirupur industrial cluster create a thick foam along River Noyyal stretch passing through Tirupur city

Source: The Hindu Dt.: September 16, 2016

A farmer-activist K. Duraisami who was crusading against the industrial pollution in River Noyyal pointed out that every time as it rains, the industrial effluents are discharged by certain segments of the industry indiscriminately assuming that flow of water in the River will dilute and take it away without getting noticed by anyone. But the court order is clear that neither

treated nor untreated effluents should be discharged in Tirupur knitwear cluster. As usual, the blame game goes on every time effluents were noticed in River Noyyal with the registered dyeing units linked to the Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) blaming the unauthorised dyeing units functioning clandestinely for the pollution. But the statistics show otherwise too. Since the High Court Order insisting ZLD norms came on January 2011, both the members of CETPs and unauthorised units were caught alike periodically.

According to Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board's District Environment Engineer K. Elankumaran, as many as 29 units involved in dyeing and fabrics washing were caught in Tirupur for indiscriminate discharge of effluents into River Noyyal and into open in August and September alone. He added that regarding the foamy effluents found in large quantities tests should have to be conducted for ascertaining what caused the foamy substance.

A large tract of wetland between Kalkere and Ramapura lakes mounded with construction debris. The mounds can be seen right from Avalahalli Main Road, while part of Pete Krishnappa Layout hosts more debris. In between the hills of waste, a drainage line snakes through. According to civic officials, these lakebeds and the wetland between the lakes have turned into hotspots for dumping construction debris from north and east Bengaluru. The norms state that construction debris should be dumped only at the eight abandoned quarries designated for the purpose on the outskirts of the Bengaluru. The dumping has been going on for over a year, but the pace appears to have picked up recently.

The wetland topography has been eroded and the lakebeds feared to be encroached. Senior civic officials concede that the debris-dumping exercise is the standard method to "morph" the topography of nala lands, wetlands and lakebeds for encroachment. They also suspect that lobbies were at play here. The legislative committee on lake encroachment has recorded more than 20 acres of encroachment in the revenue area. G. Vidyasagar, CEO of the Karnataka Lake Conservation and Development Authority, says the authority had sent a report on the dumping of debris around these lakes to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, seeking immediate action. He added that if no action is taken, the authority will move to take criminal action.

Local sources say that on busy days, more than 500 trucks of debris can be seen on the wetland between Kalkere and Ramapura lakes

Source: The Hindu Dt.: September 16, 2016

More corals are dying and others are succumbing to disease and predators after the worst-ever bleaching on Australia's iconic Great Barrier Reef. A swathe of corals bleached in the northern third of the 2,300-kilometre (1,429-mile) long biodiverse site off the Queensland state coast died after an unprecedented bleaching earlier this year as sea temperatures rose.

Andrew Hoey of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University reported that they measured a lot of heavily bleached branching corals that were still alive. On top of that, snails that eat live coral are congregating on the survivors, and the weakened corals are more prone to disease. A lot of the survivors are in poor shape. It is the third time in 18 years that the World Heritage-listed site, which teems with

marine life, has experienced mass bleaching after previous events in 1998 and 2002. The researchers said even though they were still assessing the final death toll from bleaching in the north, "it is already clear that this event was much more severe than the two previous bleachings". Bleaching occurs when abnormal environmental conditions, such as warmer sea temperatures, cause corals to expel tiny photosynthetic algae, draining them of their colour.

Source:

- *http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/pollution/Immersed-Ganesh-idols-float-in-sea-cleaning-of-shores-ordered/articleshow/54061279.cms*
- *http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/pollution/Ganga-water-has-heavy-metal-pesticide-traces-CPCB/articleshow/54351076.cms*
- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/continuing-effluent-discharge-into-river-noyyal-worries-farmers/article9113343.ece*
- *http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-karnataka/once-a-wetland-now-buried-under-construction-debris/article9205306.ece*
- *http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Many-more-corals-die-in-Great-Barrier-Reef-bleaching/articleshow/55062147.cms*

General Wetland News

Researchers reported that climate change is disrupting the sensory systems of fish and can even make them swim towards predators, instead of away from them. These abnormal behaviours are linked to the effect of carbon dioxide (CO_2) on how the brain processes signals from sensory organs, according to the study published in the journal Global Change Biology. The researchers showed that farmed fish often live in CO_2 conditions 10 times higher than their wild cousins. Rod Wilson, climate-change marine biologist at the University of Exeter in England said that their research will allow fish farmers to optimise conditions, and specifically CO_2 levels, to improve growth and health of their fish, profitability and the long-term sustainability of the industry. The scientists believe that further study of farmed fish which already provides as much

seafood for human consumption as that caught in the wild may be crucial for understanding how aquatic species will evolve to climate change.

Source:

- *http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Climate-change-can-make-fish-swim-towards-predators/articleshow/55012717.cms*