

Revival plan for 12 water bodies springs new hope

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Gurgaon: With the city staring at an imminent water crisis, the MCG seems to have finally woken up to the need of reviving water bodies to recharge groundwater and prevent waterlogging.

After a series of articles in TOI highlighting the slow death of water bodies in Gurgaon, the civic body has started work on reviving two water bodies in Basai and Sukhrali villages.

The work on these two ponds is part of a larger plan rolled out by the MCG to rejuvenate 12 lakes and ponds across the city before the onset of monsoon, in order to give them the maximum amount of time to improve the city's water reserves.

Deputy commissioner and MCG chief T L Satyaprakash told TOI, "A study is being carried out to understand the catchment area so that the ponds can be rejuvenated in the right manner and we get enough water in the season for groundwater recharge."



Officials said these water bodies will be built as recreational spaces to bring in more revenue, which would then help to maintain the area. The corporation aims at building the Basai pond as a 'model pond' and would base the restoration work of other water bodies on it. Restoration work in Basai will be completed within the next two months, said officials.

Spread across an area of 4.21 acres, the pond is the only source of drinking water for villagers in Basai. The pond has a catchment area of 53 acres, but it was encroached upon by sewage and waste dumping, shrinking the water body to just a small patch.

"Even though a lot still needs to be done, the major achievement is that we have revived two wells that used to be the source of drinking water for villagers. Also, the pond has been revived to be a public space. We have involved villagers closely in the process so that they get a sense of belonging and take ownership of the pond," said Y S Gupta, joint commissioner of MCG.

Officials said a comprehensive study was carried out in December last year before the restoration work to revive the water bodies was undertaken. The civic body has also roped in Delhi's Future Institute as a knowledge partner for the project.



"We studied 120 water bodies in Gurgaon. Of the 120, we came down to 12 on the basis of feasibility, catchment area and practicality. We plan to revive 12 ponds in a span of six months," said Swati Sharma, programmes and research head at Future Institute. The 12 water bodies that will be revived are in Sukhrali, Ghata, Badshahpur, Fazilpur Jharsa, Begumpur Khatola, Garauli Kalan, Basai, Sarai Alawardi, Jahazgarh, Kadipur, Sarhol and Dhanwapur.

Sharma said the revival work was started from Basai and Sukhrali, as these lakes were already in a better condition and there was no sewage waste in the water. The ponds that are less polluted and can be revived without any technological intervention will be revamped in the first phase, while those that are polluted with sewage and industrial waste will be taken up in the next phase.

"We will use technology, including installing sewerage treatment plant, to revive polluted water bodies," added Sharma.



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