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Vibhutipura lake: A success story in making

Vibhutipura Lake, located near old HAL airport, at Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar, Varthur, is another lake among many, that's getting a face lift this year. "A few years ago when we first shifted here, this was a beautiful lake with clean water, with migratory birds coming in and people used to also fish in the lake. Now this 43 acres lake has shrunk with garbage and debris being dumped here. It has become a sewage pit. Now that the restoration has begun, we hope that the lake will regain its lost beauty," said Madhu Ashok, a resident of LB Shastri Nagar. A walkathon is being organised by VIKAS, a resident's group on December 14 at the lake to speed up the process of restoration. "The contractor has been given a one year contract, at the end of which, all the points listed in the detailed project report must be completed. The bunds need to be fixed, the island formation needs to be completed and a walking track needs to be built. Once the water table is recharged, people can once again start using the water from the lake for household purposes," said a VIKAS member. Ashok Gowda, BDA Engineer assured that most of the work has already been completed. "The island work is nearly completed, even the walkway is 90 per cent done. Most of the work that's remaining is related to the clearance of the encroachment, which the Tahsildar is responsible for. By March, the rejuvenation should be more or less done," he said. The main aim of VIKAS is to increase awareness among the

people. Once the BDA completes its rejuvenation project, the group has taken up the responsibility to take over the maintenance of the lake.

ABOUT VIKAS

In 2006, Uthkarsh, a residents' group of the LB Shastri Nagar was formed, with the aim to motivate residents and government officials to improve the quality of life in the locality. Soon a lake team was formed to pursue the forest department and the government, to take initiatives to save the lake. In 2011, the lake was handed over to the BDA. A walkathon was organised on November 3, 2012, to create some noise regarding the degradation of the lake. Attended by over 500 people, including BDA/ BBMP official, MLA and corporator, the walkathon led to the formation of VIKAS - which works with officials and the government to save the lake. Restoration work by the BDA began in Feb 2013.