

Bengaluru's Water Crisis Spurs Powerful Action: Science, Policy & People Unite for a Water-Secure Bengaluru at The Art of Living

Category: Business

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A powerful convergence unfolded at The Art of Living International Center during the Suvarnamukhi River Rejuvenation: Action & Awareness Workshop, bringing together government departments, subject-matter experts, and community leaders to co-create a roadmap for rejuvenating the Suvarnamukhi River.



The Jal Kalash ceremony which symbolizes India's timeless reverence for water as a sacred, life-sustaining resource

The Suvarnamukhi River Rejuvenation Project, a collaboration between The Art of Living Social Projects, the Government of Karnataka, and IIM Bangalore's Centre for Public Policy, stands as a model for participatory, science-driven river restoration. Conceived by Dr Lingaraju Yale, National Director of River Rejuvenation Projects at The Art of Living Social Projects, the initiative integrates science, spirituality, and community action to revive a vital lifeline of Bengaluru's southern landscape.

Jointly guided by Prof. Gopal Naik (Jal Jeevan Mission Chair Professor, IIM Bengaluru), Shri Prabhash Chandra Ray, IFS (Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Nodal Officer), Dr Lingaraju Yale, and Bhavyata Jethva, Project Lead, the programme is setting new benchmarks in participatory water management in the peri-urban space.

With the insightful vision of Smt. Uma Mahadevan, IAS

(Additional Chief Secretary and Development Commissioner, Government of Karnataka), and her commitment to taking the project forward, the workshop reaffirmed a collective resolve to turn the action plan into tangible, on-ground transformation.

Rooted in Reverence, Driven by Science

The event opened with the Jal Kalash Ceremony, where water from five sacred rivers – Kumudhvatī, Arkavathī, Vrishabhavathī, Suvarnamukhi, and Palar – was sanctified and brought together. Students from the Vaidic Gurukul at the Center recited the Apah Sukta from the Rig Veda, invoking the sacredness and life-giving power of water. This moment symbolised the seamless blend of India's spiritual ethos with modern environmental science.

As Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, whose vision continues to inspire The Art of Living Social Projects' groundbreaking initiatives, reminds us, *"Rivers and rains are the cradle of life. Safeguarding Bengaluru's depleting water sources and disappearing green cover is an urgent priority. We have always used the water from the holy rivers to purify ourselves, but today we have reached a point where we have to purify this water. The roadmap prepared jointly by government bodies and the Art of Living River Rejuvenation Team is a promising beginning. We must now translate this into sustained action on the ground and ensure lasting water security for people, trees and all forms of life."*

Policy, Ecology and People: The Trifecta of Change

Smt. Uma Mahadevan observed, *"Rapid urban expansion is necessary for economic growth, but it has depleted the water table. Covering a peri-urban area of 216 square kilometres with a storage capacity of 65 million cubic feet, this reservoir and its 110 associated water bodies and 332 streams can potentially restore groundwater, capture rainwater, and*

become a sustainable water source for 69 surrounding villages. This project not only becomes a model in Karnataka but also in other states across India."

Shri Prabhash Chandra Ray, IFS, elaborated on how ecological restoration is being balanced with wildlife conservation. *"In this project, The Art of Living can play a major role in community engagement of residents in gated communities and RWAs. Alongside, we are ensuring that biodiversity and wildlife are preserved while water systems are revived."*

From the academic sphere, **Prof. (Dr.) Gopal Naik** emphasised behavioural change as central to success, *"Behavioural changes are required to make this project successful. The Art of Living is the best place for driving this shift in mindset."*

Integrating Natural and Technological Solutions

Adding a scientific perspective, Dr. Y. Lingaraju noted, "In the name of urban development, nature is weeping." Advocating for nature-based solutions, he urged replacing high-energy sewage systems with simple, ecological interventions such as bio-bridges, pollution-absorbing vegetation, and natural rainwater recycling, which deliver maximum impact with minimal engineering.

The workshop also showcased emerging innovations, including nanobubble technology presented by Dr. Jagjeet Singh Kochar, a water conservationist from Punjab, alongside nature-based pollution mitigation models shared by Dr. Prakash Kulkarni, President of Bhageerath NGO, and Shri Kris Madhusudan, Managing Director, Prithvi Eco Sciences Pvt. Ltd.

A Model for Replication

The Suvarnamukhi initiative is part of The Art of Living's nationwide movement to rejuvenate India's rivers and restore groundwater. Since 2013, the organisation has been reviving 72 rivers and streams, enhancing water security and livelihoods

for more than 3,45,00,000 people.

In Bengaluru, the project will revitalise 110 water bodies across a 216 sq. km catchment, directly benefitting 69 villages and 9.3 lakh residents.

As discussions concluded, one message stood out – collaboration is the cornerstone of conservation. With science providing precision, governance ensuring accountability, and communities sustaining long-term impact, the Suvarnamukhi River Project is emerging as a replicable model for sustainable water management and a scalable [solution for water crisis](#).

About The Art of Living Social Projects

The Art of Living, a non-profit, educational, and humanitarian organisation founded in 1981 by the world-renowned spiritual leader and humanitarian Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, is committed to addressing India's pressing water challenges. Through its large-scale River Rejuvenation Projects, the organisation works to mitigate water scarcity by restoring rivers, reviving ecosystems, and improving the quality of life for communities across the country. Get involved, donate now: [NGO for Water Conservation in India, Top NGO in India for Social Projects](#).

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