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MCG plans to revive seven water bodies before monsoon

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Hindustan Times



This revival plan is necessary to conserve the groundwater table, which has been depleting at an alarming rate — 15.58 metres between 2005 and 2016.(HT File Photo)

The Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) will revive seven ponds in the city before monsoon for which a budget of Rs 1 crore has been sanctioned.

Last year, the MCG had planted some aqua fauna in a portion of Basai pond in an effort to replenish the water body. The work on the remaining pond will start next week.

This plan is necessary to conserve the groundwater table, which has been depleting at an alarming rate — 15.58 metres between 2005 and 2016.

Last year, the MCG had plans to revive 12 water bodies within a year, however, owing to lack of funds, the civic body got approval for reviving seven ponds.

“We are planning to revive seven water bodies in the next three months. The project has a budget of Rs 1 crore for each pond. Reviving these village ponds will also recharge the groundwater table of the region,” said Sudhir Chauhan, senior town planner (STP), MCG.

This project is crucial as the Central Groundwater Board (CGWB) had categorised Gurgaon as ‘over exploited’, following which the Punjab and Haryana high court banned groundwater extraction in the district in 2015. It had also asked the Gurgaon deputy commissioner to check illegal boring in the region.

The waterbodies which are included in the project are Basai, Begampur Khatola, Sarai Alawardi, Ghata Jheel, Sukhrali pond, Kadipur and Jharsa pond. These waterbodies have the potential to be revived before monsoon as they have a catchment area, he said.

“The plan is to fill these water bodies with water and remove encroachments from the area. We will also beautify the surroundings of the pond. The waterbed will be dug up to help recharge the groundwater table,” Chauhan said.

According to the government records, of the 120 village ponds in Gurgaon district, only 15 are in a condition to be revived, the rest were lost to urbanisation.

Last year, the MCG had carried out an exercise to map all water bodies as the land records of a large number of water bodies were altered as the city developed, MCG officials said.

According to official records, around 95 acres on which village ponds were located have now been used to build high-rises. This, despite the fact that in Regional Plan 2021, relevant policies had been proposed to preserve water bodies: “The areas under water bodies, ox-bow lakes and paleo-channels and their surrounding areas as shown in the ground water rechargeable areas to be kept free from any encroachment or development to allow free flow of water. Construction activities should not be permitted in the areas. Suitable measures should be taken to maintain the water bodies with the minimal flow/water level,” the policy states.

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