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“Dumping of debris into a stretch of Cooum river continues”

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Dumping of debris into a stretch of Cooum river continues

Residents of Arumbakkam and Thirumangalam complain of sewage pollution

K. LAKSHMI
CHENNAI

A portion of Cooum river near Arumbakkam and Thirumangalam continues to be vulnerable to dumping of debris and slurry from construction sites.

A section of residents from Mogappair and Arumbakkam complained that debris from construction sites are often dumped into this portion of the river. Though projects have been devised for eco-restoration of the waterway, sewage pollution and encroachments on river bank continued, they said.

Slurry from construction sites, brought in heavy vehicles, was dumped on the banks of the river. The slurry then found its way into the river bed through a pit dug nearby.

The pool of slurry stagnated on the river bed. It would obstruct the free flow of floodwater during the north-



Flood hazard: Residents fear that the debris will hinder flow of floodwater during the northeast monsoon. •M. VEDHAN

east monsoon, residents feared.

Residents of Golden George Nagar also alleged that slurry from pile foundations at the construction site of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board, near Arumbakkam, was also brought by lorries and dumped into the river.

However, work has been halted temporarily after a directive by the National Green

Tribunal, Southern Bench.

K. Sridhar, president, Golden George Nagar Residents' Welfare Association, said, "Lorries disposing of slurry in the river along Poonamallee High Road, near the bridge connecting Nerukundram with our area, has reduced now. But, we are now fighting against the problem of construction debris and fresh encroachments."

The association had mobilised funds to plant saplings along the river banks in their locality to prevent pollution and misuse of the waterway. However, this could not be implemented until the stretch was cleared of debris, he said.

'Remove vegetation'

Residents also wanted the river, particularly near Koyambedu, to be cleared of vegetation before the monsoon.

Officials of the Water Resources Department said steps were being taken to clean the portion of Cooum as part of monsoon preparedness. "We will coordinate with the Greater Chennai Corporation to remove solid waste under the Chennai Rivers Restoration Project. Measures will be taken to step up monitoring of the stretch and seize such lorries," an official said.

News Item in The Hindu newspaper, Chennai Edition dated 28th September 2021

Residents of Arumbakkam and Thirumangalam complain of sewage pollution

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