

## **Paravur Lake a Serious Concern for Kollam District, as it has been put to death .....**

It has been a while since we got back to Paravur Lake to understand the degeneration that has taken place since 2014. To us the lake is as good as dead, we went back to middle of the lake because our efforts to kick start paddy farming in Kazhikuzhi Ela after 2 decades has hit a road block because there is no water in the Ela. Eravipuram Krizhi Bhavan has stopped distribution seeds for farming. The key to water supply to a host of villages in Kollam is Paravur Lake and the river Ithikkara which flows into it. What we saw in 2016 was devastating in all respects.



**Fig: Sand deposits that has filled up the bosom of the Lake spread over various small islands**

Due to the closure of the estuary at Paravur, sand deposits have piled up in huge quantum such that the lake has no water carrying capacity. And any water that collects there through the discharge from Ithikkara River is purposefully made to flow into the sea through the spillway due to multiple special interests.

The spillway is left open at the instance of the real estate mafia led by some of our elected representatives (Panchayat, Block & District) as they have converted the paddy fields to real estate. If water gets stored in Paravur Lake then the toilets will get clogged and the houses would be part submerged, akin to Munroe Island.



**Fig: Comparison of the pictures from 2014 and 2016**

Meanwhile with support from V.J Kurien I.A.S (Water Works Secretary), we picked up the issue with Major Irrigation Department Kollam, but the powers were so entrenched that we couldn't make any headway. Our work with our Representatives both in Parliament and State has been very disappointing because we never understood what they represent. We are sharing that for an understanding as our demand has been very simple political will to restore the estuary for the water security needs of 12 Local Bodies bordering Paravur Lake and Ithikkara River.

**MP: Premachandran-** Had three meetings since 2013 Well will look into it after the elections was the refrain once, will work on this after the Panchayat elections, well let me get back to you as I need time to study the documents provided. This has to be seen in his capacity as water resources minister of Kerala.

**MLA: Jayalal-** Held 2 PowerPoint presentations at his residence and had long discussions. Acknowledged the issue and even mentioned that his house hold has water woes because of this. Promised to do the needful, but then worked underground and threatened the Deputy Director (Collectorate) when he tried to initiate meeting to get this issue resolved.

**MLA:Aziz-** I am there with you go ahead. Well where we should go to. As his ignorance and lack of understanding stood out. All we could do is not trouble him much.

It begs the question what should an Ngo or a common citizen do to generate political will on an issue as serious as this one as it affects the drinking water needs of Kollam District. Forget Livelihood and other economic issues. We want all to understand that farming has been affected in Umayanallor Ela and Kazhikuzi Ela due to the above mentioned issue. With the summer kicking in soon, we have a major issue at hand. Unless ground water is recharged our ponds and chiras won't have water for farming.

We seek opinion from the public on the same as to what is the next resort, as we are left with no option even after CESS validating my report, CWRDM agreeing to the same and Major Irrigation drawing the spot of the estuary which has to be restored and the DPR too was made ready. Now what...?