

WATER LOGGING WOES AUTHORITIES AS WELL AS PUBLIC SHOULD STEP UP TO TACKLE IT

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A prolific guide in urban planning team, who leads technical divisions like physical, social and economic analysis, land use analysis, according to master plan, analysis of government policies/programs/regulations/bylaws and level of implementation of those. He is also responsible for land development identification, SWOT analysis, infrastructure analysis, projections, gap assessment, benchmarking and urban governance assessment.

While we are swiftly making a shift towards the smart cities, the ghost of water logging, especially during the monsoon is constantly haunting the existing cities. Water logging, a major issue across the country, as well as in the capital and the adjoining areas mostly Gurugram, has been a constant phenomenon since quite a long. Despite various measures, it is difficult for authorities to tackle it. Water logging is more of an administrative issue as compared to the planning. However, we can't deny the fact that better planning can help in removing bottlenecks but the grave situation of water logging raises a serious question on transformation to smart city.

If we talk about Gurugram, the city known for sky-scrapers and which suffers the most during monsoon, gets deluged if it rains heavily for a couple of hours. The authorities are given a head up on the issue every year during the monsoon, but every time the situation is same.

People often consider that urban planners, who are thought to possess a magic wand through which they can tackle any such problem, can shoe-away the haunting ghost of water logging, which is not true until an unless combined efforts from society, administrative and urban planner will not be done.

To enable free flow of rainwater from residential as well as commercial areas, it is required to have integrated drainage system. Improper integration of the drainage system especially near the flyovers or the underpasses or in densely populated areas makes the situation worse. Before starting



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construction of any drain, the PWD should make a blueprint of the area to understand the slope and level of road for smooth construction. This would enable them to construct wider and longer drains for free flow of water along with some solid waste, which does not choke in middle of the drains.



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Faulty designs of roads, flyovers and underpasses without studying the slope and flow of water in the area add on to water logging woe in India. The drains mainly along the roads, flyovers and underpasses should be corrected in a way that the slope of the roads matches the drains hence the water can move in from there.

Apart from this, it has also been observed that the departments come into action just a month before the monsoon. They start the cleaning process of the drains one month prior to the monsoon and in a haste leave the silt, which comes out of them, there itself. When rains lash out the silt goes back into the drains with the flow of wa-

ter resulting into blockage and hence water logging. It is advisable that the cleaning process of the drains should happen at least every quarter and the waste which comes out from it should be disposed off timely. This would not only avoid water logging rather will help in improving the waste management system too.

Addressing the above-mentioned reasons won't be enough to tackle the water-logging problem. Authorities will have to take stringent action too. They need to act strictly on the usage of plastic and plastic waste as well as encroachment over the drains.

Polythenes, among all other plastic materials, are the major contributor to water logging as they hardly decompose and block the drains. Polythenes also interrupt the precipitation of water to recharge the ground water. There should be strict action on the usage of polythenes and proactively dispose of the plastic waste before it enters the drains. Also, it is important for the citizens to understand the hazards of using polythenes and come forward for using other bags such as paper bags or cloth bags.

Strict action against encroachment over the drains is also required as in India the footpaths and drains are usually flooded by the encroachers. Mostly the street vendors leave their waste in those drains itself. The authorities are not able to clean those drains regularly and hence the end result is water logging. So, the authorities should work on providing alternatives to the street vendors and clear the encroachment from the footpaths or drains.

Hence, if the administration as well as society joins hands with urban planners then it will be easy to deal with the haunting ghost of water logging and it will also enable swift switch towards smart city. 