



flooding due to highly clayey soil and due to this only 3% of the water gets infiltrated in this soil condition.

- **Irrational urbanisation in areas around various lakes in Bengaluru** has resulted in the deterioration of original storm water drains.
- During transition from villages and panchayats into the Bhruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) fake documents of land records were fabricated for corrupt interests.
- Due to the above corruption Lakes and their catchment areas were transformed into private lands.
- Builders backfilled these private lands and soon made quick money building apartments, shopping malls and information-technology parks.
- To **become pulsating economic growth engines** Bengaluru saw ruthless destruction of the environment.
- **Bengaluru witnessed a nexus of corruption** involving politicians and bureaucrats, abstaining from environmentally sensible decisions for short-term gains.

### Way Forward:

- **Building institutional capacity to handle the problems of the future** through constitutionally compliant structure, with local governments at the top.
- **Meeting the water requirement of Bengaluru** by enhancing the recharge capabilities of the catchment by maintaining sufficient open spaces and green spaces with native species, decentralised rainwater harvesting, and wastewater treatment and reuse.
- **Ecological imbalance leading to drying up of Arkavathy river** due to check dams, excessive groundwater use and presence of eucalyptus plantations.
- **Implementation of Innovative (ecological and engineering) solutions** for water retention like watershed interventions in the Arkavathy basin by volunteers of agencies.
- **Properly implementing reforms like rainwater harvesting**, solar water heating, segregation of garbage and the stoppage of littering within the deadlines.
- **Better Inter-agency Coordination: Instead of multiplicity of institutions there must be single institutions** by merging and subordinating Eleven independent planning authorities to the Metropolitan Planning Committee for proper execution.
- **Remove unacceptable constructions** and restore wetlands and tank beds.
- Focus on **Climate resilience** that goes beyond flood control to minimise the damaging environmental impact on cities.
- Focus should be on **improving cheap public transportation buses** instead of waiting for the expensive metro.
- **Preserve existing green cover and plant more trees**, both in the city and around it.
- **De-concretise pavements of Bengaluru** prohibit littering and segregate garbage as unsegregated garbage clogs drains.

- **Enforce sewage treatment plant** operational standards.
- Efforts must be made to **improve Rajakaluves (channels that connect water bodies)**.
- Make way for **peoples' participation** in State departments and parastatals.
- **Proper Accountability:** In case of poor infrastructure design, make the whole chain of decision-making accountable.

**Sharad**

