

River taken for dead for 30 years floods B'luru area

Syed.Asif@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: The Dakshina Pinakini river was dry for three decades and taken for dead. It came alive and breached its banks on Wednesday, submerging a stretch of the busy Channasandra Main Road near Bengaluru's tech corridor under four feet of swirling water.

The overflowing river underscored the volume of rainfall in its catchment area and in the city over a short period of time. Torrential rain since last weekend had caused heavy flooding in large swathes of Bengaluru, including high-end residential colonies.

The deluge threw traffic out of gear on Channasandra Main Road, which starts from Hope Farm Junction near Whitefield and connects through Koralur with Hoskote and Malur. The road is flanked by over 25 villages that are slowly turning into residential pockets for those working in the tech sector. The roads brings vegetables and fuel to the city every day.

"We had not seen the river flowing like this in the past 30 years. It is quite dangerous. Local police and gram panchayat members decided not to allow two-wheeler riders and light motor vehicles on the road till the

water recedes," said Sonnegowda, a resident of nearby Bhodhanahosahalli.

Trucks and buses were allowed later in the afternoon after the flood ebbed a bit.

Dakshina Pinakini originates near Nandi Hills and flows through Chikkaballapur, Hoskote, Kadugodi, Sarjapur and Malur before meeting waters discharged from Bellandur and Varthur lakes to enter Tamil Nadu.

The river used to run dry till Malur for the past two decades and its existence was almost forgotten. Though some environment groups had

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tried to revive the river in the past, successive governments have ignored it.

How did the river go from dry to spate? Arun Kumar of Samethanahalli explained: "It has been raining heavily in Chikkaballapur and Kolar districts. As a result, water has been flowing towards Yele Mallappa Shetty lake and Hoskote lake on the outskirts of Bengaluru. Since both these lakes are full, their water is flowing into the river."

Arun Kumar, an agriculturist from the area, called the flooding a wake-up call for everybody. "We must ensure there's no encroachment along the river."