

Hesaraghatta Lake and Grasslands

March 20, 2021

In news: Recently, the Chief Minister of Karnataka announced a 'theme park' spread over 100 acres at Hesaraghatta

Key updates

- The CM announced that a theme park will be established in Hesaraghatta **with private partnership to provide information and training with permanent exhibition and demonstration of native livestock, breeds of sheep/goats and poultry breeds**
- **Criticism of the move:** The recent announcement has raised many an eyebrow as it comes on the back of a big blow to conservation efforts for the grasslands during the recent meeting of the State Wildlife Board in January this year
- The Chief Minister had shot down the proposal to declare it 'Greater Hesaraghatta grasslands conservation reserve'.

About Hesaraghatta Lake

- The Hesaraghatta lake bed and grasslands in the surrounding catchment area are considered an important reservoir of biodiversity
- Hesaraghatta Lake is a freshwater man made reservoir
- **Formation:** It was created **in 1894 across the Arkavathi River** to meet the drinking water needs of Bengaluru city
- This lake was conceived by Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, the Dewan of erstwhile Mysore state and the M. C. Hutchins, the chief engineer of Mysore.
- **Location:** North-western part of Bengaluru, Karnataka
- **Area:** It spans an area of about 1912 acres. The 356 acres of grassland surrounding the lake bed is the last

remaining grassland habitat in the Bengaluru region.

- Fauna: It is a refuge for **endangered wildlife species like the Lesser Florican and the leopard**, and the place is home to over 130 species of birds, many mammals and butterflies and millions of insects.
- The lake was once frequented by migratory birds like the Northern Shoveller, Common Redshank, Northern Pintail and Garganey, Common Greenshank, Common Sandpiper, Wood Sandpiper, Little Ringed Plover, Black-Winged Stilt, and several other species.

Major concerns

- This lake is inching towards a slow death.
- The reservoir of the lake was last filled up about a decade ago, in the year 1994. This has resulted in the deterioration and drying up of the lake.
- The erosion and continuous silting are adding to the woes of the lake
- Frequent visits by the photographers, tourists is causing immense damage to the grassland habitat.

Arkavathy River

- It originates at Nandi Hills of Chikkaballapura district.
- It is a tributary of the Kaveri, it joins Cauvery river as a tributary near Mekedatu.
- The river drains into the Chikkanayakanahalli Lake near Kanivenarayanapura.
- Kumudavathi and Vrishabhavathi rivers are tributaries of this river.