



“Revival and Renovation of Traditional Water Bodies” Parameswara Teertham



By
Vivekananda Kendra - Nardep

City Union Bank, Kumbakonam informed us that they will be sanctioning the Revival and Renovation of Traditional water body – Parameswara Teertham which is a part of the holy 64 Teerthams of Rameswaram. So we started the work to be started in right earnest by performing a small pooja at site on 16th July morning.

Shri.Nagarajan who is our Teertha Mitra took the lead in performing the pooja along with 15 local well-wishers and Shri.Muniyasamy, Paramparai Poojari of the nearby Muneeswara temple. Our Supervisor Shri.Kadiresan and coordinator Smt.Saraswathi was also present.



Teertha pooja on 16 July 2021

Present pitiable condition of the water body

This water body is abandoned since last sixty years and is used as a dumping ground by the surrounding houses. The water body is huge in size and the Parameswara Teertham is a part of this small lake. Unfortunately, the locals have dumped their waste on all the three sides for years and so the entire area is highly polluted including water in the Teertham.

Ownership of the water body

Unfortunately, even the line departments of the district administration are not aware about the ownership of the Traditional water body. In Rameswaram, different Traditional water bodies (Teerthams) are owned by different departments such as HR & CE, Panchayats, Municipality, and Forest departments. In case of Parameswara Teertham, we went on asking different departments and finally came to know that the ownership of this dilapidated Teertham is with the Diwan (Former Raja of Ramnad). And so, we have to approach the descendants of the Raja of Ramnad, he in turn wanted NOC from Village officer and Panchayat, and thus our running for getting official permission continues....

Difficulties in developing social capital

It is difficult to bring the local stake holders on the table although the renovation of the Traditional water body is in their interest. The entire environment will be neat and clean and due to percolation, water table in their own wells will increase. But, unfortunately, some of them have vested interest as a few of the surrounding houses are illegal and others would like to encroach the balance land in future and so not interested in this constructive work.

Problems for carrying machinery and material at site

There are no roads on any side to bring the JCB for cleaning the tones of garbage in and around the Teertham as well as de-silting sixty years muck. We tried several options such as:

1. Demolishing a portion of the compound wall on the way to TWB so that we can take JCB inside and reconstructing the wall afterwards.
2. Exploration of mini JCB
3. Exploration of other pathways to enter the Teertham

Unfortunately, we could not succeed and so decided to carry out the work without big machinery. Even carrying construction material to the site is problematic. In the process, time required for renovation will go up and so the cost too will shoot up.



Condition of TWB before starting the work



Garbage dumped by the surrounding houses outside the water body



Inside structure of the dilapidated Parameswara water body



Putrefied water body – workers removing tons of mud manually

Visit of Government Officials

Executive Officer, Mandapam along with other Government officials visited Papa Vinashaka Teertham and Parameswara Teertham on 23 July 2021. Purpose of the visit was to understand the issues related with TWBs.



Shri.Madasamy Sundaram, AD - Panchayat and R.Ilavarasi, Executive Officer, Mandapam Panchayat Unionat Papa Vinashaka Teertham



Shri.Madasamy Sundaram, AD - Panchayat and R.Ilavarasi, Executive Officer, Mandapam Panchayat Union visiting Parameswara Teertham

