2026: Mass Fish Deaths in Urban Waterbodies in India

Based on available media reports, we could document at least 41 incidents of mass fish deaths in urban lakes, ponds and tanks across India in 2026. The incidents occurred in major metropolitan cities such as Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi, Pune, Hyderabad and Guwahati, as well as smaller towns and urban centres.

South India recorded the highest number of 16 incidents. Bengaluru alone accounted for six, while others were reported from Chennai, Salem and Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu and Hyderabad, Tellapur, Warangal and Boduppal in Telangana. West India followed with 12 incidents in cities including Vadodara, Ahmedabad, Panaji, Mumbai, Pune, Ajmer and Jodhpur. North India recorded five incidents, including one each in Srinagar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Gurugram and Kanpur cities.

The affected waterbodies vary widely in size, shape and utility. They include historic lakes such as Ana Sagar in Ajmer and Banganga Tank in Mumbai; major urban lakes such as Pashan in Pune, Sursagar in Vadodara and Durgam Cheruvu in Hyderabad and smaller ponds and local waterbodies in residential areas. The fish deaths at Sukhna Lake in Chandigarh and Deepor Beel in Guwahati have raised serious questions over management of Ramsar sites.

Month wise, June recorded the highest (7) number of incidents, followed by April (6), July (5), and Aug. & Oct. (4 each). 3 incidents each were reported in Jan., May, Sept. and Nov. months. Several cases occurred during summer and the early monsoon period, when falling water levels, high temperatures, reduced dissolved oxygen and the pollutant accumulation make aquatic life in waterbodies vulnerable.

Reasons for Mass Fish Deaths(MFD): Untreated sewage, industrial effluents and chemical contamination has been suspected as the main causes in many cases. Water extraction, declining water levels, poor maintenance and religious offerings were also identified as contributing factors in some incidents. The exact reasons remained unknown in most cases.

A common concern is the expansion of settlements and real-estate development around urban waterbodies without adequate sewage networks, functional STPs and maintenance of stormwater drainage. In several locations, drains continue to carry sewage and wastewater into lakes even as public money is spent on beautification, recreation and tourism projects. This raises questions about the priorities of urban lake restoration programs.

Like previous years, the Bengaluru city has remained a major hotspot. The Harohalli Lake Sunkalpalya Lake, Doddagubbi, Jakkur and Mullur lakes have reported MFD during this year also. The incidents signify persistent entry of sewage and polluted runoff in urban lakes.

Pashan lake MFD in Pune has raised questions about sewage management & coordination among civic agencies. Mumbai’s Banganga Tank faces recurring fish deaths linked to offerings during Pitru Paksha rituals. The administration has failed to take effective preventive steps.

Misplaced Priorities: The Sanjay Lake MFD in Delhi is also an example of lake mismanagement. Fish deaths occurred despite substantial public expenditure on restoration by different agencies. Similarly, Sursagar Lake in Vadodara and Vastral Lake in Ahmedabad demonstrate how expensive beautification and maintenance arrangements can fail to protect aquatic life when facilities such as aeration systems are non-functional or poorly maintained.

The fish deaths in Rankala lake in Kolhapur and Kakkalur lake in Tiruvallur are examples where tourism or beautification plans have got priority while the lake faces serious pollution and maintenance problems. This raises questions about the priorities of urban lake programs.

Impact on Fisheries: The economic losses were particularly serious for people dependent on urban lakes for fishing. At Doddagubbi in Bengaluru, a fishermen's cooperative reportedly suffered losses of around ₹20 lakh. At Chinna Waddepally Lake in Warangal, nearly 200 fishing-dependent families were affected, with losses estimated at ₹30 lakh. At Raa Cheruvu

in Telangana, more than 10 tonnes of fish reportedly died, severely affecting local fishers. Similar losses were reported from waterbodies in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan.

Public Health Concerns: The fish deaths at Ambal Nagar tank in Tamil Nadu raised concerns because the waterbody reportedly supports the needs of nearly 18 villages. Incidents at Thangal Lake near Chennai and Chelikunta Lake near Hyderabad also triggered concerns about groundwater quality and public health. In wetlands such as Deepor Beel and Dal Lake, the impacts extended to birds and other aquatic organisms, affecting the wider ecosystem.

Official Inaction: The response of authorities after fish deaths was often inadequate. In several cases, water and fish samples were not collected promptly. Even where investigations identified possible causes, they have not led to sustained corrective measures. The lack of regular monitoring and public disclosure makes it difficult to establish accountability and prevent repeated MFD incidents.

Impact of Judicial Intervention? The judiciary have also intervened in at least two MFD incidents. In Goa, the Bombay High Court took suo motu cognisance of fish deaths at Mala Lake. The NGT has also sought responses from authorities over fish mortality in Jodikere Lake in Athani town of Belagavi. Further, the Pashan Lake incident has raised concerns about regulatory compliance of court orders. Though, the legal interventions brought official attention to the incidents, however, the same has not translated into achieving effective implementation of corrective measures and lasting improvements.

Summary: The 41 reported mas fish death incidents in 2026 reveal the gap between urban lake restoration claims and conditions on the ground. From Bengaluru and Mumbai to Delhi, Pune, Hyderabad and smaller towns, fish deaths have repeatedly been associated with sewage inflows, industrial pollution, falling water levels and poor maintenance. Beautification and recreational infrastructure cannot replace pollution control and ecological management.

Every incident should activate prompt collection and testing of water and fish samples, public disclosure of findings, identification of pollution sources and time-bound corrective action. Urban lakes must be managed as living ecosystems and public assets, with meaningful participation from local communities and fisherfolk. Without corrective actions and accountability of responsible agencies, mass fish deaths will continue to affect the aquatic life and people dependent on the urban waterbodies in India.

SOUTH ZONE

KARNATAKA: Bengaluru; Jan. 2026: **Fish found dead in Harohalli Lake** Around a dozen fish were found dead at Harohalli Lake in Yelahanka on Jan. 17 morning, raising concern among walkers and environmental activists, though officials attributed the incident to seasonal factors. According to morning walkers, around 12 common carp fish were found dead along the edges of the lake. Each fish, measuring between 12 and 18 inches, were mostly of the same species. They urged authorities to conduct an immediate inspection, suspecting low dissolved oxygen levels or possible sewage pollution.

June 2026: **MFD at Sunkalpalya Lake** Hundreds of fish deaths have been reported from Sunkalpalya Lake under Bengaluru West City Corporation (BWCC) over the past three weeks due to suspected water contamination and a decrease in Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels. A resident and a walker who noticed dead fish floating and a few gasping for breath say the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) officials, when contacted, were just passing the buck.

Executive Engineer (Lakes), BWCC, Geetha, said the layouts near BGS Hospital Side need to be connected with sewage lines and the Bengaluru Water Supply & Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has also informed that a diversion channel will be installed to prevent sewage inflow into the 15.4-acre tank. A senior official also expressed concern over the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB), for letting their sewage flow into the lake. “If KSPCB pulls up the water board, then the works would gain pace and lake pollution can be fixed,” she said.

Oct 2026 **MFD in Doddagubbi Lake** The Doddagubbi Lake in eastern Bengaluru's Mahadevpura constituency became a graveyard on Oct 3 with thousands of fish found dead across its 125-acres. No official reason has been given for fish death, while an activist's suspicion of sewage dumping remains unverified. The activist, KC Mahesh, a regular walker at the lake, said, "I suspect that since this is a long weekend, some unscrupulous builders have taken advantage because officials will not be there, and let raw sewage into the lake."

Doddagubbi Lake full of maggots Nearly a week after mass fish-kill, Doddagubbi Lake is stinking because civic officials failed to dispose of the dead fish; as a result, the decaying fish have become a breeding ground for maggots and causing a bad odour in the surrounding area. Raghunandan, JP, a resident and KRS Party functionary, said that last week, following heavy rainfall, leachate from Mitganahalli yard flowed down into the lake and caused contamination, and still no one came and cleared it. The activist also stated that under Shubra Bengaluru, a fund of Rs 11crore was also allocated for lake development, and now, Greater Bengaluru Authority officials claim they have written to the minor irrigation (MI) department to take over the lake as it is the original custodian of the lake, but it is reluctant.

The Bengaluru Urban Fisheries Department Deputy Director Chikkanna stated that, due to pollution, almost all the fish have died and a cooperative society to help poor local fishermen community has suffered a loss. Anand Babu from Yellammadevi Mahila Meenugarara Sahakara Kshema Abhivrudhi Sangha, that has 82 members, said poor families were dependent on the fish catch of tipalia, katla and rohu, and the fish weighed from 500gm to 1.5kg, and entire aquatic life has been destroyed. "We have lost around Rs 20lakh due to mass fish kill," said Babu.

Oct. 2026: **PGs blamed as dead fish float on Mullur Lake** Residents living around Mullur Lake in Kodati Gram Panchayat have raised concerns about water contamination after hundreds of dead fish began floating in the water body. A few of them said the water level in the lake had increased because of the rains, and within a couple of days, they noticed dead fish. It is said the 37.26-acre water body has three inlets, and contaminated water flows into it through all of them. In the past, Western Digital Company and United Ways NGO funded the rejuvenation of the lake.

"United Ways completely ignored the requests from citizens living around the lake and did not make diversion channels for the lake during rejuvenation. Unplanned development and illegal paying guest accommodations (PGs) let out sewage into roadside drains, which pollute the lake," said Chetal Gopal, a member of Friends of Lakes. "The need was fencing and desilting. These were taken up. Initially, for two years, the lake received a good amount of rainwater. After PGs mushroomed, sewage started contaminating the lake. We had raised the issue with the KSPCB," said Radhakrishna Pradeep, the senior manager at the United Ways.

Nov. 2026: **Fishkill at Jakkur Lake; sewage leak suspected** Jakkur Lake in north Bengaluru witnessed a fish kill Nov. 27, with civic officials investigating whether a sewage pipeline leak or rupture caused the deaths. A Bengaluru North City Corporation engineer who visited the lake said water samples had been collected and sent for testing. Results are expected within three to four days. Jala Poshan, a citizen-volunteer organisation involved in the lake's upkeep for 10 years, said fish kill usually occurred about twice a year, often during seasonal changes. However, the volunteers did not rule out sewage contamination as a possible cause of the incident.

Athani; Aug. 2026: **NGT seeks responses over fish mortality in Belgavi** The NGT sought responses from the state govt and four other authorities over allegations of mass fish mortality in Jodikere lake near Ambedkar Circle in Athani town of Belagavi district. The matter arose from a complaint filed by a person in January this year registered as a suo motu Original Application. The applicant claimed that hundreds of dead fish, including large ones, were found floating in highly polluted, oxygen-depleted water contaminated by sewage, municipal waste and possible industrial effluents. The plea attributed the incident to the Athani municipal

authorities' alleged negligence in allowing untreated sewage discharge, garbage dumping and poor lake maintenance, which it said violated environmental laws. The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board submitted a report dated Sept 30, while the Deputy Commissioner was directed to file a report. Next date of hearing is Dec. 03.

TAMIL NADU: Tambaram; Feb. 2026: Sewage in Thangal lake kills fish As a large number of fish were found floating dead in Thangal lake in Nedungundram, residents have raised an alarm on sewage mixing contaminating the waterbody. The 35-acre lake is located in the Puthur village of the Nedunkundram village panchayat. The Highway department had built a canal to the lake during the construction of the Perungalathur-Agaramthen bypass road to prevent inundation. However, residents said that the same canal is now carrying untreated sewage from more than 3,000 houses in the area, and ultimately mixes with the lake.

As per Sept. 2026 report, the freshwater source for farmers has turned into a cesspool, with untreated sewage discharged into the canal leading to Thangal Lake by about 20 lorries every night. This has raised concerns over pollution, groundwater contamination and recurring flooding in nearby residential areas. The 35 acre lake in Puthur village, under Nedungundram village panchayat, is located about 5km from Tambaram Corporation limits. Residents said sewage lorries discharge waste from surrounding areas into the canal - which flows into the lake - instead of taking it to the STP in Tambaram. Residents said that despite rapid real estate development, the locality lacks an adequate stormwater drain network.

Vilathikulam; May 2026: Hundreds of fish float dead in Ambal Nagar lake Hundreds of fish died in the Ambal Nagar kanmani (waterbody) in Vilathikulam town. The public sought immediate clearance of the dead fish as an unbearable stench pervaded the area. Sources say the Ambalnagar tank of the Public Works Department (PWD) is the source of water for nearly 18 villages. The tank receives water from rains and from jungle streams of Sithavanayakkanpatti, Mettupatti, Aatrangkari, Kandasamypuram and other villages.

Pointing to pollution, the public alleged that wastewater from the streets of Ambalnagar are drained directly into the waterbody spread over 60 acres due to the absence of a proper wastewater disposal system. Also, the water of the tank remains unusable as it was not desilted for more than 20 years. Also, the severity of the pollution is high as water level has reduced due to summer. This had resulted in the death of fish, said an official of the Vilathikulam town panchayat, adding similar deaths of fish had occurred here especially before summer seasons.

Chennai: Sept. 2026: Poor waterflow kills tonnes of fish in channel near Korattur lake More than a tonne of tilapia was found dead in a channel near Korattur Lake on Sept. 09, less than a month after an estimated four to six tonnes of fish washed up dead in the Kosasthalaiyar River near Ennore. Fisheries Department officials suspect the Korattur fish died after being trapped in stagnant water with low dissolved oxygen levels.

According to an official, the sluice gate of Korattur Lake was opened on Sept 7 as part of monsoon preparedness, allowing water and several fish to move into a channel which eventually leads to Retteri Lake. The gate was closed soon afterwards because of ongoing metro waterworks nearby. With the flow cut off, the fish remained trapped in the channel for a prolonged period, and officials suspect oxygen levels in the stagnant water fell. "If the sluice had remained open, the water would have continued to flow, and the fish could have reached Retteri Lake," the official said.

Tiruvallur; July 2026: Mass fish die-off in Kakkalur lake sparks outrage Unauthorised domestic sewage inflows have caused severe water pollution in Kakkalur lake in Tiruvallur resulting in thousands of dead fish floating across the waterbody. The lake is located in the heart of Tiruvallur, connecting Kakkalur Panchayat and Tiruvallur. Spanning 194 acres and 2,682 metres long, the waterbody is equipped with 4 sluice gates and two surpluses, and has a storage capacity of 15 million cubic feet.

Kakkalur lake was rejuvenated for Rs 3.52 crore under the Rural Development Department and the State govt's Namakku Naame scheme. The upgrade introduced walking tracks, iron fencing, and a visitor's park. The revamped lakefront was opened to the public in March. The public has made a collective appeal to the district administration to intervene, halt pollution, clean the water body, and restore the lake.

Tiruvallur District Collector, S Kavitha, told DT Next, "The fish death issue is not happening for the first time at the lake. But I've instructed the Fishery department officials to find the reason behind the incident. The Tiruvallur municipality and local body must sever the illegal sewage connection to the lake and connect it to the existing drain line to reach the Sewage Treatment Plant." As per Aug. 2024 report, the discharge of untreated sewage and indiscriminate dumping of poultry and other waste had turned Kakkalur Lake a potential local tourism spot, into an eyesore.

Coimbatore; Nov. 2026: Mass fish deaths reported at Selvachinthamani tank A large number of dead fish were found floating near the shutters of the Selvachinthamani tank in the city on Nov. 17, triggering concern among local residents and fishermen. Following complaints from the public, officials of the Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation (CCMC) rushed to the spot and initiated an inquiry into the incident. The sudden death of fish has raised questions over the quality of water in the tank, though the exact cause of the incident is yet to be established. Local fishermen and residents said they were unaware of what could have triggered the fish deaths. During an inspection, CCMC officials told TNIE that the deaths were confined to a small stretch near the tank shutters and had not affected the entire waterbody.

Salem; Nov. 2026: Fish found dead in large numbers in Periya Puthur lake Hundreds of fish were found dead in the Periya Puthur lake near Kondalampatti in Salem on Wednesday, causing concern among residents and financial losses to those who have taken the waterbody on lease for fish farming. The inflow into the lake increased after the recent rain in Salem. As part of fish-rearing activities, around 13,000 fish fingerlings, including varieties such as jalebi fish, rohu, catla and parai fish, had been released into the lake.

"The incident has come as a shock to us involved in the fish farming activity," said one of the lessees. According to him, the total value of the fish stock lost is estimated at around Rs 14 lakh. Residents alleged that despite the large-scale fish mortality, officials from the environment and health departments have not yet inspected the lake or initiated action to ascertain the cause of the deaths.

TELANGANA: Hyderabad; April 2026: **Dead fish surface in polluted Chelikunta lake at Tellapur** Large numbers of dead fish have been reported in Chelikunta Lake in Osman Nagar near Tellapur, on the outskirts of Hyderabad. Residents state the lake is being polluted by untreated sewage from multiple sources, including construction companies. Fish are dying and locals are suffering from an unbearable foul smell, posing serious health risks to the community.

This is not an isolated incident but a persistent failure of enforcement despite repeated complaints. Continued negligence is endangering public health, groundwater quality, and the ecological balance of the lake. If immediate corrective measures are not initiated, the situation will deteriorate further, leading to irreversible environmental damage and the spread of waterborne diseases.

The Tellapur Neighbourhood Association (TENA) pointed out that the inflow of sewage from multiple sources, including nearby labour camps and construction companies, is leading to the severe contamination of the lake. Despite the repeated complaints from residents and citizens concerned, there is no action from the concerned officials, they said.

Sept. 2026: Durgam Cheruvu fish death blamed on sewage flow The HMWS&SB on Sept. 05 identified four major sewage inlets that was carrying sewerage into the Durgam Cheruvu at Jubilee Hills, resulting in the death of tonnes of fish, according to fishermen. Officials

identified four major routes through which sewage is entering the lake — the Madhapur I&D nala, Silent Valley I&D nala, Vitthal Rao Nagar box nala and the route from the TGIIC layout. They inspected the flow at the inlets and discussed measures to stop sewage from reaching the lake.

Officials said the existing STP at Durgam Cheruvu is functioning at full capacity. However, the rapid growth of residential areas and population around the lake has resulted in a significant increase in sewage generation. During the monsoon, the problem is compounded by additional flows entering along with rainwater. The team that inspected the lake decided to study the topography and hydrology of the surrounding areas and prepare a permanent action plan to prevent sewage from mixing with the lake water. The plan will include sewage diversion, treatment and other technical measures at the four identified inlets. Officials will work in coordination to implement the measures.

Boduppal; Aug. 2026: **Mass fish kill in Raa Cheruvu** A serious environmental disaster occurred at Raa Cheruvu, a lake in the Boduppal Circle of the Medchal constituency. More than ten tonnes of fish died after chemicals were released into the lake at night. The next day, people discovered the problem. As a result, the smell of the dead fish has made life difficult for people living nearby. Furthermore, many fishers who depended on the lake for their income have lost their primary source of income. This disaster is even worse because about ten tonnes of fish had already been caught and sold earlier this month. In fact, buyers from Ramnagar Market visited the lake several times, collecting tonnes each time. Now, this fish kill has wiped out the remaining fish and has raised concerns about whether fishing in the lake can continue in the future.

Warangal; May 2026: **Fish kill at Chinna Waddepally lake** Thousands of fish died in Chinna Waddepally lake in Warangal over the past two days, prompting fishermen to seek compensation from the government for losses estimated at ₹30 lakh. Fishermen said nearly 10 tonnes of fish were found dead in the lake and alleged that the incident occurred due to negligence by officials during ongoing bund development and repair works. Warangal Fishermen's Association leader G. Sudhakar said around 200 families from Desaipet, Kashibugga and Mattewada depended on the lake for their livelihood. He said the affected families would face severe hardship if compensation was not provided immediately.

The fishermen alleged that officials of the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation and contractors drained water from the lake without prior notice or precautionary measures. They claimed the sudden fall in water levels led to oxygen depletion and resulted in the mass fish deaths. Some fishermen suspected possible water contamination by unidentified persons, while others pointed to large-scale encroachments that had reduced the lake's spread from around 100 acres to nearly 35-40 acres. They said carrying out repair works in a shrinking water body without proper planning worsened the situation.

WEST ZONE

MAHARASHTRA: Navi Mumbai; April 2026: **MFD At Navi Mumbai Pond** A large number of fish were found dead in the holding pond at the Mini Seashore in Vashi, triggering concern among local residents and environmentalists. Civic officials have collected water samples for analysis and begun supplying fresh water into the pond as an immediate measure. Former corporator Raju Shinde raised the issue with Vashi ward officer Sukhdev Yedve, following which the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) initiated a preliminary inquiry.

The incident has sparked fears of possible pollution in the area. Shinde, along with joggers and environmentalists frequenting the area, alleged that the deaths may have been caused by the discharge of toxic chemicals from nearby industries in the MIDC belt. However, Yedve suggested that natural factors could also be responsible. Locals from Juhu village in Vashi, who often catch fish from the pond, said the sudden mass death has raised alarm among the

community. The civic body has assured that further action will be taken based on the test results, while the exact cause of the incident remains under investigation.

Mumbai; Oct. 2026: **Hundreds of fish found dead in Banganga Tank** Hundreds of fish have been found dead in the historic Banganga Tank in Walkeshwar, South Mumbai, drawing attention from local residents and environmentalists. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has called a meeting with local residents and priests on Oct. 05 to discuss measures following the fish deaths. The meeting will be held at the civic body's D ward office.

The civic body has stepped up cleaning operations and plans to increase manpower at the tank. It has also installed an aeration pump and will undertake pumping out and refilling of the tank. The BMC has sent water samples for testing following the fish deaths. The issue has occurred previously. In 2025, the BMC removed around 10,000 kg of dead fish, floral waste and other organic material from Banganga over three days.

Residents and local priests said fish deaths have been reported in the tank in previous years as well, but usually towards the end of the pitru paksha fortnight. This year, however, the deaths have been reported within 10 days of the rituals beginning.

After mass fish death the BMC planned to hold a meeting with local residents and priests this week. BMC has to step to discuss the measures to prevent death of fishes in the tank as the deaths has become a yearly concern. According to BMC official, around same time every year, Ban Ganga tank, which was built in was built in AD 1127, has seen death of fishes.

Fish deaths have become nearly an annual occurrence there following the Pitru Paksha rituals, when flowers and various food items are immersed in the water. The immersions likely cause a severe drop in dissolved oxygen levels, killing aquatic life in the tank, experts say. “This has been going on for the last 10 years,” activist Rohit Manohar Joshi, president of Yeoor Environmental Society, told Mongabay. “Every year, fish die because of the rituals performed during Pitru Paksha.”

Mansee Bal Bhargava, founder-director of WforW Foundation, said that oil and ghee form an ultrathin layer on the water’s surface, restricting the exchange of oxygen. The disturbed surface tension of water also impacts microorganisms that serve as food for fish. Moreover, underwater plants and phytoplankton are unable to carry out photosynthesis effectively, affecting the production of oxygen and food for fish. Stalin D., director of the conservation nonprofit Vanashakti, said that the tank needs aerators, and all dumping of organic matter needs to stop. “Let the offerings to the departed be done in the sea. It’s a heritage water body, which should be the pride of Mumbai and not the graveyard of marine life.”

Tribune Edit: Faith must co-exist with ecological care Thousands of fish dying in Mumbai’s Banganga Tank after Pitru Paksha rituals is not an isolated environmental mishap. It is a recurring crisis that exposes the failure to anticipate and manage the ecological impact of religious gatherings. Reports indicate that similar fish deaths have occurred repeatedly in recent years, with organic material from ritual offerings contributing to deterioration in water quality and depletion of dissolved oxygen. The tragedy is that the problem is predictable. The dates of Pitru Paksha are known, the crowds are expected and the nature of the offerings is familiar. Yet preventive action remains inadequate. There is also huge responsibility on religious bodies to ensure that faith should not be a reason for ecological damage/ destruction.

Pune; March 2026: **Hundreds of fish dead; builders issued notice** The lake along side the Hazrat Siddique Shah Baba Dargah in the Pune Camp area has turned into a site of an ecological disaster. The mindless drawing of water, reportedly for construction work on the adjacent property belonging to the Maharashtra State Examination Council, has led to the death of hundreds of fish, triggering action by the PMC against the culprits. The massive drop in water level in the lake next to the B.J. Medical College grounds, opposite Lal Devel, on Wellesley road has also sparked off condemnation from citizens.

The crisis first came to light in mid-Feb. when a foul stench started emanating from the garden, a popular spot known for its lake, greenery and fish-feeding tradition. Investigations by the PMC Garden Department revealed that the water level had been drastically lowered due to the unauthorized or excessive extraction of water using heavy-duty motors. The garden department has taken a firm stand against those responsible. In a show-cause notice issued on Feb. 10, 2026, the PMC identified the contractors and architects involved in the neighboring construction project: M/s. SS Civil Projects Private Limited and Architect Ajuta Diwan.

The notice demanded an explanation within five days, asking the entities to justify why legal action should not be initiated against them. The garden department escalated the matter on Feb. 20, 2026, writing directly to the city engineer, building permission department. The follow-up letter calls for stringent action against the developers whose permissions were originally granted by the building department. The garden department is seeking compensation for the losses and immediate measures to restore the pond's health.

People noted that the lake, which usually has enough water and attracts birds, lost most of its water in just a few days, raising concerns among nearby residents. Local residents think that water from the lake might have been redirected to a nearby construction site, which could explain the rapid decrease in water levels.

April 2026: **Death of fish in Pashan Lake: Sample taken & sent for test** Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) in April 2026 initiated water pollution tests at Pashan Lake after death of fish en masse had been reported. As per the civic officials, the incident happened on April 08. Sonune added that the measures for reduction of the pollutants will be taken after the test report, which is expected in a couple of days. Environmental activist Anant Gharat said, "Pashan Lake is not just a waterbody. However, PMC officials have consistently neglected its upkeep."

After the incident came to light, the civic administration has taken disciplinary action against officials. A show-cause notice has been issued to the head of PMC's drainage department, while four senior officials —two each from the drainage and solid waste management departments. PMC said that it was found that the STP had been shut down, due to which untreated sewage was being discharged into the lake. This was leading to not only a foul smell in the locality but also the death of the fish due to water contamination.

RTI link NHAI to Pashan lake fish deaths According to official records from the PMC, a major drainage line was damaged during excavation work carried out by NHAI along the Bavdhan service road. The drainage infrastructure had been installed by the civic body following earlier directions from the NGT to protect the lake's ecosystem.

Civic documents indicate that the damaged line was not repaired promptly, leading to the discharge of more than 200,000 litres of untreated sewage per day into stormwater lines. These lines eventually connect to the water system feeding Pashan Lake, potentially contributing to the deterioration of water quality. Advocate Krunnal Gharre, who accessed and shared the RTI documents, alleged that the incident reflects multiple administrative lapses. He claimed that the continuous flow of untreated sewage near the lake contributed significantly to water toxicity. Gharre also alleged that repeated warnings issued by PMC officials to NHAI regarding the damage and associated public health risks were not acted upon.

Kolhapur; April 2026: **Dead fish found floating in Rankala Lake amid pollution concerns** Hundreds of fish were found dead floating in Kolhapur's Rankala lake on April 27 morning, triggering allegations of severe water pollution and official apathy toward the lake's conservation. Rankala lake, one of Kolhapur's major tourist attractions that draws thousands of visitors daily, is currently the focus of beautification plans, including the proposed installation of a musical fountain by the Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC). Activists, however, allege that civic authorities have prioritised tourism-driven projects over addressing pollution in the lake. Activists have demanded that the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) and KMC

officials immediately inspect the site, collect water samples, and take corrective measures to prevent further pollution. They claim repeated complaints about contamination have gone unaddressed.

Thane; June 2026: **Hundreds of Dead Fish Found in Milapnagar Lake** Hundreds of fish were found dead in Milapnagar lake in Thane, triggering anger among residents who blamed untreated industrial effluents for the incident, officials said. The fish were found dead in the Milapnagar lake located in Dombivli MIDC area on June 04. Local citizens claimed that the lake turned black and a foul smell spread in the vicinity after water from nearby chemical units allegedly seeped into it. A civic official said preliminary inspection points to possible discharge of industrial waste into the lake. Residents of Milapnagar and surrounding MIDC areas alleged that such incidents have occurred in the past, but no permanent solution has been found.

Panaji; April 2026: **Fish found dead in Mala lake** Large quantities of dead fish were seen floating in the waters of Mala lake in Panaji since April 11, leading to concerns among locals. After locals raised an alarm over the occurrence, the Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB) officials on April 12 collected samples of the lake for testing. Officials from the fisheries department also visited the site for an inspection. Residents said they suspect that some miscreants have dumped some material into the water, contaminating it. Officials said that this is not the first time that such an occurrence is witnessed in Mala lake and that similar situation had occurred in 2011.

The Bombay high court took suo motu cognisance of reports of large quantities of dead fish found floating in Mala lake. The high court has made the directorate of health services and GSPCB parties in the matter. When the PIL came up for hearing on April 20, the bench said it is concerned about the issue and about such things happening to water bodies on the periphery of cities. It also referred to the Saipem lake pollution at Navelim.

The Bombay high court on May 06 expanded the scope of its suo motu PIL on dead fish floating in Mala Lake to include the Mandovi river line area to remedy the water pollution. The court stated that the main issue that needs to be addressed would be the very high quantity of faecal coliform bacteria present in the river around the area where the casinos are operating.

The bench of justices Valmiki Menezes and Amit Jamsandekar directed the member secretary of the GSPCB to conduct a similar quantitative and qualitative study and prepare a report on the quality of water within the Mandovi, more particularly at the estuary of the river between the Iffi jetty and Mandovi bridges. The high court also directed the GSPCB, on the basis of data already available with them, to commence taking action based on the report, and place it before the court on June 1.

On the Mala lake issue, the report of the joint site inspection by the GSPCB, water resources department and fisheries department pointed to contamination of water due to sewage discharge. The report recorded that waste water (sewage) from residential areas along the western periphery of the lake was seen flowing into the lake through stormwater drains. It directed the CCP commissioner to conduct a joint inspection of each residential house to ascertain the exact cause for the presence of faecal coliform bacteria, and identify their sources.

June 2026: **Dead fish surface in Campal Lake** A fresh fish mortality incident has been reported at the pond in Campal Lakeview Colony, Miramar, with scores of dead fish found floating in the waterbody connected to the St Inez Creek on June 02. Workers of the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP) cleared the dead fish from the pond. The pond was developed by the PWD and the WRD, with a dedicated canoe deployed to maintain its cleanliness. However, during high tide, water from the St Inez Creek enters the pond, often bringing debris and litter along with it.

Why Is This Happening Across Goa? The GSPCB along with institutes like the ICAR-Central Coastal Agricultural Research Institute (CCARI) have identified a web of interconnected human and natural activities driving these events. With Goa's booming tourist economy and expanding urban centers, wastewater infrastructure has struggled to keep pace. In many coastal belts and dense settlements, untreated or partially treated sewage leaks from overloaded septic tanks or is discharged directly into municipal storm drains.

While rainwater flushes out stagnant systems, the initial heavy downpours wash accumulated synthetic fertilizers from inland paddy fields and plantations straight into adjacent streams and lakes. Beyond organic waste, some inland river stretches near industrial estates experience chemical pollution. Inadequately treated industrial effluents can sharply alter the watershed pH or salinity, shocking the biological systems of local fish species. Climate change has noticeably altered local weather patterns, causing frequent spikes in summer temperatures. From a purely physical standpoint, warm water holds less dissolved oxygen than cold water.

GUJARAT: Ahmedabad; June 2026: Mass Fish Deaths in Vastral Lake Numerous fish reportedly died in Vastral Lake Garden in Ahmedabad, triggering anger among local residents. The deaths were suspected to be linked to low dissolved oxygen levels, with allegations that none of the lake's six aerators were functioning despite the AMC paying a contractor for their maintenance. However, municipal officials gave conflicting explanations: one suggested that closed aerators may have caused the deaths, while the East Zone Deputy Health Officer suspected sewage pollution. Residents demanded an investigation, regular monitoring and action against those responsible.

In May 2023, dead fish surfaced again in Sursagar Lake, an occurrence that civic officials described as regular during summer. Environmentalists attributed the deaths to low dissolved oxygen levels, although the Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) claimed that oxygen levels were adequate. The civic body had spent ₹38 crore on the lake's rejuvenation and beautification but had stopped aeration, arguing that boating activities provided sufficient aeration. Officials also suggested that an increase in the fish population could be a possible reason for the deaths. Similar fish mortality incidents had been reported at the lake at least twice in the previous year, reportedly due to inadequate aeration.

Vadodara; June 2026: Mass Fish Deaths in Sursagar Lake Numerous fish reportedly died in Sursagar Lake, Vadodara, after dissolved oxygen levels fell, allegedly due to the closure of the lake's oxygen plant and poor maintenance. The incident triggered anger among local residents and environmentalists, who questioned the municipal corporation's spending on lake beautification while basic maintenance remained neglected. Residents also highlighted the deteriorating condition of the lake's walkway, which was flooded during early monsoon rains, and demanded that the oxygen plant be restarted and the walkway repaired.

RAJASTHAN: Ajmer; July 2026: Lakhs Of Fish Dying Daily In Ana Sagar Lake A large number of fish have perished in historic Ana Sagar, the lake located in the heart of Ajmer city, in the past few days. More than two tonnes of dead fish were removed from the lake in the past three days alone. The stench emanating from the water body has led to lot of discomfort among the local residents. They refuse to believe that the fish have died because of natural causes and are blaming the local administration for mismanagement. They say that while 40% of clean water has been drained out, the sewage continues to flow into the lake, making it more polluted. Ana Sagar Lake was built 1100 years ago by King Arnoraja of Chauhan dynasty. Human settlement has already swallowed the lake's perimeter and catchment area. It once had a 9 km radius that has come down to 3 km.

Superintending engineer and in-charge officer for Ana Sagar at Ajmer Municipal Corporation, Manohar Songara said reports of fish deaths were received four days ago. He said the cause was lack of oxygen in the lake water. "The Corporation immediately emptied over 150 bags of 50 kg of lime into the lake. Fountains were also activated at several locations," he said while adding that a desilting machine has been deployed along with four teams to remove the dead

fish from the water. Additionally, a hydraulic excavation machine has also been pressed into service. Officials said that the current water level in the lake is 10.08 feet while its capacity is 16 feet. They also said that this is fish breeding season.

Jodhpur; July 2026: **Around 500 fish die in Padampur pond** Around 500 fish reportedly died in Padamsar pond, Jodhpur, over a period of two days. Local reports and experts attributed the deaths to people feeding the fish bread and flour, which may have adversely affected their health and water quality. Environmentalists advised visitors to avoid throwing bread or dry flour into the pond and use only appropriate fish feed if feeding the fish.

NORTH ZONE

J&K: Srinagar; Aug. 2026: **Dal Lake Fish Deaths Raise Concerns** Dal Lake is facing fresh concerns over its deteriorating condition, with large stretches of water appearing green, thick weed growth visible across the lake and hundreds of fish reportedly found either dead or unconscious. During interactions with several shikarawalas, they alleged that water quality has sharply deteriorated and claimed that diesel leakage from the machines used for mechanical de-weeding is contributing to the lake's contamination. As per KNT, the machinery deployed by the Lakes Conservation and Management Authority includes a high-capacity de-weeding machine, procured for mechanical weed removal from Dal Lake. The machine is designed to extract and remove large quantities of aquatic weeds. However, several shikarawalas alleged that the machinery leaks diesel into the water during operations, claiming the contamination is visible in the lake's deteriorating condition.

Chandigarh; Jan. 2026: **Oil spill triggers fish deaths at Sukhna Lake** Several fish were found dead in Sukhna Lake on Jan. 15 after an oil spill at the regulatory end, triggering environmental alarm. Preliminary investigations indicated that the oil leak originated from motor boats operating in the lake, resulting in vast black oil slick in the ecologically fragile waterbody. Declared a national wetland in 1988 by the Union ministry of environment and forests and also a "living entity" by the Punjab and Haryana high court in 2020, Sukhna Lake enjoys special conservation status, with its catchment area notified as the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary. The man-made, rain-fed lake, spread over 338 acres, is home to 30-odd species of fish, including major Indian carps and some exotic carps. Every year, the UT department of animal husbandry and fisheries stocks fish in the lake, while fish from surrounding areas are washed into the water body during monsoon.

Gurugram; May 2026: **Key waterbody in Haryana faces ecological stress** A seven-day independent study, conducted between May 16 and 22, identified multiple ecological stressors at Basai pond: fish deaths, sewage inflows concern, ritual food offerings, livestock pressure, invasive vegetation and mounting solid waste. The assessment recorded six fish mortality incidents over five days, including deaths of mangur and rohu fish across different parts of Basai pond (or johad — a small water body, which is also used for religious practices).

The first fish mortality was documented on May 18, when a 2-2.5-foot mangur and a rohu were found dead near the shoreline. Additional fish deaths were subsequently recorded across all three study zones, leading the report to conclude that the problem was not localised to a single section of the pond. The report recommends immediate action to investigate and stop sewage inflows, improve scientific monitoring of water quality, remove accumulated waste, clear invasive vegetation, regulate livestock access and create awareness about the ecological impacts of direct food offerings into the pond.

Delhi; May 2026: **Mass fish Death in Sanjay Lake due to Mismanagement** In fact, the incident has happened despite crores of rupees having already been spent on the restoration work of Sanjay Lake by various agencies under different schemes. Sadly, a detailed break-up of the expenditure is not publicly available. Similarly, there is no official information on the quantity, timing, or species of fish released into the lake.

This mass fish death episode amply demonstrates the level of inefficiency prevailing among the multiple agencies managing the lakes in Delhi. It also exposes the deep institutional failures affecting the water governance system in the national capital. Blaming the heat spell will only act as a cover up, allowing the real culprits go scot-free. The incident indeed warrants a thorough independent probe and strict action against all involved. Is that too much to ask?

Kanpur; Aug. 2026: **Thousands of Fish Die in Zoo Lake After Heavy Rainfall** On Aug. 16, thousands of fish were reported dead in the lake at Kanpur Zoological Park. A preliminary investigation attributed the deaths mainly to a sharp decline in dissolved oxygen due to increased silt and turbidity following heavy rainfall. The fish population had also reportedly exceeded the lake's natural carrying capacity due to a lack of regular harvesting. Rainwater and drainage water entering the lake from nearby areas may have further deteriorated water quality. The zoo administration installed pumps to improve water circulation, used oxygen tablets and began identifying and blocking entry points through which outside drainage water was entering the lake.

EAST ZONE

BIHAR: Muzaffarpur; July 2026: **Fish Deaths in Sikandarpur Lake** Fish have been dying in Sikandarpur Lake for around six weeks, causing losses worth lakhs of rupees to fish farmers and creating a foul smell in the area. A Fisheries Department investigation found abnormally high ammonia levels in the water and identified untreated medical waste from nearby hospitals and chemical wastewater from a dhobi ghat as major pollution sources. Catla fish were reportedly the worst affected. The department submitted its findings to the district administration and Municipal Corporation, recommending immediate measures to stop untreated waste discharge and prevent further pollution.

JHARKHAND: Jamshedpur; April 2026: **Fishes die in Beldih lake** A serious environmental concern has surfaced in the city after thousands of fish were found dead in Beldih lake at Dhatkidih on April 08. This marks the second such alarming incident in recent days, following a similar mass fish death reported earlier in the Subernarekha river. The back-to-back incidents have intensified public concern over rising water pollution levels, with residents urging authorities to take stringent and timely action to prevent further ecological damage.

Preliminary findings suggest that the incident may have been caused by a sharp depletion of dissolved oxygen in the water or the presence of toxic substances. As an emergency measure, officials have begun spraying chemicals in the pond to purify the water and prevent further loss of aquatic life. Water samples have been collected and sent to laboratories for detailed analysis.

Bokaro; Sept. 2026: **Thousands of Fish Die in Pond** Thousands of fish died in Surya Sarovar pond in Sector 4, Bokaro, spreading a foul smell across the surrounding area. The cause remains unknown, but locals suspect poisoning or chemical pollution, possibly from detergents used to wash vehicles in the pond during Vishwakarma Puja. Residents demanded the removal of dead fish and testing of water and fish samples to determine the cause.

Bokaro Steel Plant (BSL) chief of communication Manikant Dhan said, “Preliminary findings point to large-scale idol immersion and disposal of puja materials as the likely cause. Colours and chemicals used in idols can disturb the ecological balance of the water body and reduce dissolved oxygen levels, which may have led to the fish deaths. A detailed examination is under way.” “Fishing rights in the pond was allotted to a displaced-category agency through due process. The lease will be valid till July 2027. The agency has been directed to remove the dead fish immediately,” he added.

NORTH EAST ZONE

ASSAM: Guwahati; Aug. 2026: Fish Deaths Raise Pollution Concerns at Dighalipukhuri Dead fish, including rohu, catla, silver carp, common carp and bighead carp, have reportedly been found in Dighalipukhuri pond for nearly three weeks. Residents and civic volunteers reported foul odour, algal growth, garbage accumulation and non-functional water-treatment machines. They suspected low dissolved oxygen and wastewater inflow from nearby toilets and urinals as possible causes, and urged authorities to stop the discharges and restore the treatment system.

The dissolved oxygen was found to be only 4–8 mg per liter, compared to the normal 7–10 mg. The presence of toxic substances was confirmed in tests conducted on Aug. 15 and again on Aug. 27. The foul smell from decaying fish has spread across the pond's surroundings, highlighting the urgency of immediate intervention. While the Fishery Department manages Dighalipukhuri, its surroundings are overseen by the Tourism Department. Officials' negligence has now led to severe contamination of these heritage ponds.

Oct. 2026: Fish deaths raise alarm over pollution in Deepor Beel Recurring fish deaths in Deepor Beel, a freshwater lake and wetland on the outskirts of Guwahati, have raised concerns over water pollution and the threat it poses to the wetland's fragile ecosystem and aquatic biodiversity. Environmental activist Pramod Kalita alleged that polluted water and various forms of waste generated in Guwahati are continuously entering Deepor Beel through the Pamohi River, raising concerns over the deterioration of water quality. The recurring fish deaths have heightened fears about the wetland's ecological health.

The recent discovery of dead fish floating in Assam's Deepor Beel Wildlife Sanctuary has triggered concerns among local communities. However, environmental experts have clarified that the mortality is tied to a natural seasonal cycle rather than external toxic elements. While experts emphasize this natural phenomenon, environmental activists like Pramod Kalita continue to urge authorities to implement stricter pollution controls and conduct regular water testing to safeguard the long-term health of the wetland.

CENTRAL ZONE

CHHATTISGARH: Bhilai; June 2026: Fish death in Bhilai pond This June 10 video report shows thousands of dead fish floating in a pond in Bhilai, Chhattisgarh, raising concerns among local residents and fish farmers. The available report confirms the mass fish mortality but does not provide a verified explanation for the deaths or identify the exact pond.

Surajpur; July 2026: Hundreds of Fish Die in Pond Hundreds of fish were found dead in Badkapara Pond in Surajpur. Locals blamed poor maintenance, accumulated waste and the inflow of dirty wastewater, suspecting toxic gas formation or oxygen depletion as possible causes. Fish trader Shiv Kumar Rajwade also alleged that poisonous gas had killed the fish, but said the collected dead fish would be sold in the market. The cause remained unconfirmed, with residents demanding water and fish sample testing.

MADHYA PRADESH: Indore; June 2026: Fish die as water level drops in Bilawali pond Dead fish lies in Bilawali pond as declining water levels amid intense summer heat and water scarcity lead to reduced oxygen levels, in Indore, Madhya Pradesh on June 18.

SANDRP