

# KRC set to give Carambolim lake a green makeover

Infographic: Sharmila Coutinho

**Margao:** The scenic Carambolim lake, near Old Goa, which forms the largest corridor in the state for local and migratory birds, is poised to get a green makeover.

The Konkan Railway Corporation (KRC) has embarked on an environment conservation project aimed at attracting more migratory birds to the lake.

"As a part of its CSR activities, Konkan Railway has undertaken a project at Goa which will draw more migratory birds to the Carambolim lake and help in the increase of their population. The project would also beautify the area," said Vaishali Patange, KRC's chief public relations officer. "Since the Karmali station on Konkan Railway route is adjoining the Carambolim lake, increasing green cover alongside the railway station would help in attracting migratory birds," Patange added.

B P Tayal, KRC's chairman and managing director, and principal chief conservator of forests Richard D'Souza had a meeting recently to lay down a road map to attract more winged species to the Carambolim lake.

As part of the project, KRC has created three mounds of size 20m x 20m with 5m height in the lake, and trees and other plants are being planted on these mounds. Fruit bearing trees like almond, mango, chikoo, cashew, etc. are also being planted alongside the newly constructed embankment which runs along the lake.

"Other plans in the area include developing an interpretation centre for bird lovers and improving seating alongside the lake for vis-

**VERDANT VISION**

- > Construction of three mounds of size 20m x 20m with 5m height in the lake
- > Planting of trees and other plants on the mounds
- > Planting of fruit-bearing trees like almond, mango, chikoo, cashew, etc. alongside the newly constructed embankment
- > Development of interpretation centre for bird lovers
- > Seating arrangement along the lake
- > Development of a bird watching site

itors, etc." Patange said.

The lake's makeover plans come in the wake of concerns raised by birders and birding enthusiasts over the decline in arrival of migratory birds to the Carambolim lake.

It may be recalled that at a news conference held in Margao last year, Tayal had told mediapersons that the KRC had allocated ₹50 lakh to conserve the Carambolim lake as part of its corporate social responsibility.

Environment and forests minister Alina Saldanha had informed the state's legislative assembly recently that a bird watching site was being developed near the second watch tower at the Carambolim lake.

Since 2011, the govern-

ment has already spent around ₹9 lakh for various works undertaken for the development of the lake. While ₹2.17 lakh was spent for protection work and rehabilitation of wildlife in 2011-12, ₹2.41 lakh was spent for eradication of *Salvinia* weeds from the lake in 2013-14. Till date, around ₹2 lakh has been spent on vegetation, installation of signage and protection work at the lake.

The proposal for construction of an interpretation centre on equitable cost sharing basis with the KRC has been submitted for government approval, Saldanha had told the assembly. The facilitation centre is expected to facilitate study on birds and biodiversity.

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