

Ramgarh Taal

Ramgarh Taal is a large natural lake situated southeast of Gorakhpur in eastern Uttar Pradesh. It lies within the floodplain of River Rapti and outflows into it through a drain called Gurrah Nalla. The lake had a maximum water spread of about 723 ha in 1970s but has now shrunk to 678 ha. Its maximum water depth has also declined from 4.5 m in 1990s to less than 3.5 m at present. The lake has a catchment area of more than 11500 ha most of which is urbanised and densely populated. The lake and its catchment are under the control of the Gorakhpur Development Authority (GDA). The lake receives storm water runoff and wastewater through several drains such as the Kuda Ghat Nalla, Gordhaiya Nalla, Mohaddipur Power House Nalla, Golf Ground Nalla and Padley Ganj Nalla.



The lake supports a significant fishery and numerous people depend upon it for their livelihood. Fishing rights are leased out by the GDA. The lake water is also used for irrigation and recreation. During later 1980s, a large tourist complex which included a Buddha museum, a Planetarium, a park and the facilities for water sports, was developed close to the lake. However, the lake has deteriorated rapidly because it receives huge amounts of domestic wastewater and solid wastes from

the urban catchment, besides large amount of sediments carried with the storm runoff. Large scale fish kills have been reported frequently in recent years. The lake also supports a large diversity of macrophytes but their excessive growth, and particularly that of water hyacinth, has created serious problems of water quality as well as for its use. The hypereutrophic state of the lake is reflected by its water quality: Total dissolved solids (TDS) up to 560 mg/L, COD up to 300 mg/L, BOD up to 110 mg/L, nitrates up to 4.6 mg/L and total phosphorus up to 4 mg/L.

The rehabilitation measures being undertaken now under the NLCP include: integrated sewerage system for interception and diversion of domestic sewage, sewage treatment plants, dredging of the inflowing drains and a part of the lake area to remove organic and inorganic sediments accumulated over decades, mechanical removal of weeds using a weed

harvester, lake aeration, inactivation and precipitation of phosphorus using alumina or other salts, lake shore stabilisation and lake front development, and recreational facilities. Education and awareness activities will be undertaken extensively and a nature interpretation centre will be established. The impact of the project implementation on different components, especially water quality, will be monitored regularly.

The Gorakhpur Development Authority (GDA) is implementing the project and shall also be responsible for the operation and maintenance activities thereafter.