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May 2015

- Mo Su Sa Fr Th We Tu
[25](#) [24](#) [23](#) [22](#) [21](#) [20](#) [19](#)

Restoring Migratory Birds winter abode – A green initiative by Magma

Magma pledges to revive the depleting and imbalanced ecological system of Purbasthali lake to bring back the winged guests

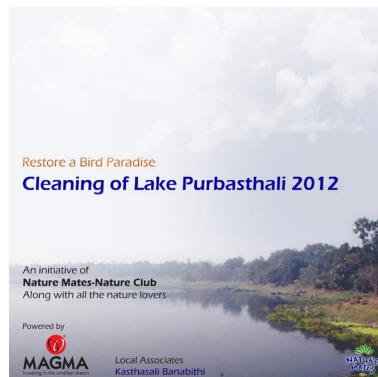
PRLog - Dec. 17, 2012 - Kolkata, 17 December 2012: Purbasthali or Chupi Char as it is locally known is a quaint block with a number of villages adjoining the only oxbow lake of the State, created by the river Ganges. But it has a lot more to it. Every winter the sprawling lake becomes the haven for thousands of migratory birds of different species who come here in search of warmth and security as some of these birds even lay eggs and hatch their little ones here, filling the whole water body with the jingle of life and color. Apart from these yearly guests, the lake has a variety of species as permanent residents. At least this was the scene a few years back.

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The fact that Purbasthali is not a protected area, it handicaps the forest department from taking charge of the maintenance of this beautiful wetland.



lake cleaning

Thus Mother Nature herself took charge. Natural management was most efficient as the lake got cleared of the aquatic floral pressure in process of large floods. But since 2000, due to lack of rainfall, there was no overflowing water pressure which can naturally eradicate a significant amount of water hyacinth from the lake to the river. As the Government did not intervene, the once lively lake lost its dynamics and turned into a clogged water body. Water birds like Lesser Whistling Ducks, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Cotton Pygmy-Goose, Common Coot, and Indian Pond Heron are among the regular visitors of the wet land. So, with the clogging of the surface water space they were left with very little possibility of navigation. The most affected species are the ones that lived on the lake permanently. The birds lost their yearly sanctuary, and Purbasthali lost its charm.

But then there was a hope of light at the end of dark tunnel . This year Magma Fincorp, Kolkata based corporate with the support of Nature Mates-Nature Club, took up the responsibility to clean up the lake. Nature Mates earlier has taken initiative to clean up smaller water bodies including the well known Santraganchi Lake which has this similar problem. With their expertise and Magma's all around support the bird lovers are all set to welcome the winged guests this year with much anticipation. Another local NGO Kasthashalin Banobithi has also extended their supportive hand in this environmentally and socio-economically significant project.

The idea is simple yet a lot of understanding of nature and environmental factors were taken into consideration. With a involvement of six hundred men within a period of 15 days including the help of three country boats and other logistic a significant amount of water hyacinth were removed. This operation facilitates the mobility of the water body, created a significant opening for the water birds where they can take their shelter. It proved beneficial for the local fishermen and the eco-tourism operators too.

The socio-economic scenario plays a vital role in implementing conservation initiative. When local people got benefitted from the natural resource they tend to protect them for their own survival and well being. This project address this criteria with due emphasis to reinstall the social protection for the migratory birds along with the provision for more open area for the water birds.

To yield maximum positive result from the initiative, both the NGOs and Magma Fincorp has decided to continue this initiative for coming three years. This is an effort by society at large to welcome our winged friends with warmth and tolerance they deserve. To mark this initiative as just another cleaning

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exercise will be unfair, as this is an effort to bring Purbasthali back to life and color, this is an effort to return the home of our feathered friends.

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