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BMC Says It Can Provide Water Round The Clock Without Taking A Private Agency's Help

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Mumbai: The BMC has revived its plans of a 24-hour water supply for the city and is confident it can do the job without taking a private agency's help.

BMC additional municipal commissioner in charge of projects Manu Kumar Srivastava said the BMC would only need a consultant to study the amount of water supplied to each ward, the leakage points and unauthorised connections

THE WATERING HOLES

Most of Mumbai's drinking water comes from the lakes on the city's fringes

UPPER VAITARNA:	687
TANSA:	485
VAITARNA (MODAK SAGAR):	455
BHATSA STAGE-I:	455
BHATSA STAGE-II:	455
BHATSA STAGE-III:	455
MUMBAI III-A:	355
(commissioned in April this year)	
VIHAR:	110
TULSI:	18
TOTAL:	3,475
(All figures are in million litres daily.)	

DOWN THE DRAIN

About 20% of the water is lost because of leakage and pilferage during distribution.

24x7 WATER IN 5 YEARS

and do a water audit and another agency to supply, fix and maintain water meters and take readings. But the actual supply would be handled by the BMC itself, he added.

The system will ensure that people receive water at all times and there is no need for storage, especially in slums, old buildings and chawls where storage facilities—like an underground or an overhead tank—are non-existent. Srivastava said the BMC would implement the project in phases across the city instead of taking up a pilot project in one ward and waiting to see how it went.

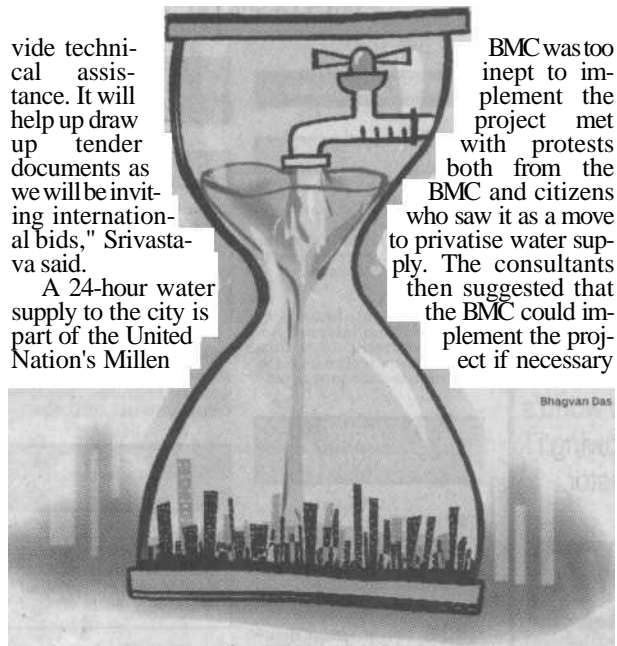
Six lakes supply 3,475 million litres of water every day to the city and about a fifth of that water is lost because of leakage and pilferage. Most city areas receive water for anything between an hour and four hours during different times of the day. Officials say they can change this system in five years.

The BMC has approached the World Bank and requested it for inputs for the project. "The recent report by the World Bank consultants, Castalia, shows how 24-hour water supply can be a reality. We are now taking it forward and the World Bank will pro-

vide technical assistance. It will help up draw up tender documents as we will be inviting international bids," Srivastava said.

A 24-hour water supply to the city is part of the United Nation's Millen

BMC was too inept to implement the project met with protests both from the BMC and citizens who saw it as a move to privatise water supply. The consultants then suggested that the BMC could implement the project if necessary



num Goals that has been accepted by the Centre. The Union government wants a 24-hour water supply to be a reality in all major metros by 2015 but senior BMC officials say they can beat the deadline.

The project was first taken up in 2006 at the World Bank's insistence; it gave a grant of Rs 32 crore for a pilot study in K-East ward. But a "flawed" report submitted by Castalia and its initial remark that the

reforms were carried out.

The BMC, in its note to the World Bank, has announced the decision to appoint a consultant to study the non-revenue component (water lost because of leakage and pilferage), pinpoint causes and provide solutions. It will also appoint another agency to supply, fix and maintain water meters and readings.

"The city will be divided into several metering zones.

The consultants will instal flow-meters on mains at the point where water is supplied from a reservoir to a ward and at the exit point where the water goes to other wards. This will help measure the exact quantity of water that each ward receives," Srivastava said..

This will help officials know how water flows within a zone, identify spots where supply is inadequate and zero in on the reasons.

"Leaking pipes will be repaired, rehabilitated or replaced and unauthorised connections will be disconnected. The meter agency will work with the consultants while setting up the meters," he said. All existing meters will also be replaced as the new meters will give automatic readings.

The BMC has also drawn up plans to replace and rehabilitate the trunk mains, ferrying water from the lakes to the treatment plant at Bhandup, at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore over the next five years. It has also begun work on three major tunnels: Malabar Hill to Cross Maidan, Marol-Maroshi to Ruparel College and Matunga and Veravali reservoirs in Andheri (E) to Yari Road in Andheri (W).

But the administration is

DRINKING PATTERN	
2006-'07 figures show K-E in Andheri has consumed more water than any other ward in Mumbai	
WARD	CONSUMPTION
A	71.89
B	9.77
C	7.15
D	74.27
E	41.96
F-N	78.44
F-S	49.10
G-N	69.29
G-S	63.82
H-E	106.14
H-W	81.30
K-E	166.76
K-W	162.50
L	117.74
M-E	93.16
M-W	82.27
N	98.45
P-N	109.85
P-S	83.67
R-C	110.42
R-N	64.86
R-S	110.71
S	121.68
T	82.96
TOTAL	2048.17

(All figures are in million litres daily; BMC also supplies 115.61 million litres to Thane Gram Panchayat.)

yet to convince corporators. The BMC standing committee last week rejected the proposal for a water-charge scheme that would entail bigger users to pay more; members questioned how it could be implemented when almost 55 per cent of water meters were not working.

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