

MUMBAI UNCENSORED

Mumbaikars battle with water crisis, poor sanitation along with COVID-19.

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Aashwin Shanker, Mumbai Uncensored, 23rd June 2021:

Midst reinfections and vaccination Mumbai is also fighting a continuous battle for water. The slums are more affected than the non-slums”.

NGO Praja Foundation on Tuesday launched a report on the unsatisfactory work of the municipal corporation in Mumbai. While it appreciates the municipal corporation’s work in handling the pandemic it also addresses how Mumbaikars, specifically people in slums and sub-slums, are deprived of basic civic comforts.

‘Status of civic issues in Mumbai – 2021’ is a white paper compiled based on data obtained through the Right to Information Act, 2005 for all 24 wards.

The report, above all, states the unbalanced water supply in the city. While some areas struggle to fulfill even their basic needs due to lack of water, others are getting enough and even surplus amounts of it.

Look, Mumbai receives 188 lpcd (litres per capita per day) which is even higher than the rules set by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) of 135 lpcd. The astonishing thing is that while the slum areas receive only 45 lpcd at

₹4.85 per month, through metered connections, the non-slum areas receive a superfluous 150 lpcd at ₹19.44 per month.

While people living in non-slums areas (able to afford water at a raised rate) enjoy a discounted price, the ones unable to fulfill their needs have to rely on water tankers and other sources, which approximately costs them Rs. 500-550 per month.

On this wretched issue, Milind Mhaske, Director, Praja Foundation said that “If BMC is able to provide 135 lpcd (as per the BIS norms) of water supply to the slum population through metered connection then, the cost will be as low as Rs 14.54 per month. Implementing 100 percent metered water connection in slums would allow them to access a required quantity of water at just Rs 14.54 per month as compared to Rs 500-550 they are currently paying.” Apart from the monopolistic rights over the distribution of water the paper also raised concerns over the poor sanitation of people.

The figures are as follows:-

- As early as 2019, the BMC announced that it will build **22,774 new toilets by 2020 of which 50 percent or 11,000 toilets will be available for women.** But the white paper has claimed that just 1 out of every 4 public toilet seats were available for women in 2020.
- In their report, the Praja Foundation has also raised concerns about depleting toilets for women. **From 2018 to 2020 the total number of toilets for women decreased by 3 percent i.e. from 3,237 to 3,146.**
- But women are not the only sufferers, **toilets for men too have also decreased from 9,646 to 8,927 in 2020** i.e. a decrease of 7 percent.
- Meanwhile, the toilets for disabled persons have increased by 83 percent in 2020.

This is not all, Praja Foundation also highlights the shortcomings of BMC in door to door waste collection. While the BMC claims 100 percent door-to-door garbage collection for the year 2019-2020, 34% of all Solid Waste Management complaints were related to the garbage not being collected in 2020.

Nitai Mehta’s “Three Deeds to a Healthy Ward” (Trustee Praja Foundation)

“During BMC’s COVID-19 management, three key areas of successes came to light that can be carried forward in post-pandemic rebuilding and further improve the services at ward level.

- **First, decentralisation of various functions at the local level for inclusive decision making and better quality of services.**
- **This can, secondly, be achieved through even more extensive use of technology, which the BMC has previously showcased an inclination for (Live Streaming budgets, online ward committee meetings and so on).**
- **Thirdly, BMC should collaborate with various stakeholders in both the public and private sector to find innovative solutions to the city’s growth. This will not only help BMC in providing basic day to day services efficiently but also in becoming a future-ready city.”**

Link:- <https://www.mumbaiuncensored.com/2021/06/23/mumbaikars-battle-with-water-crisis-poor-sanitation-along-with-covid-19/>