

# Water scarcity & sanitation challenges persist in Mumbai slums: Praja report

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File pic

**Mumbai:** BMC's promise of 24x7 water supply remains unfulfilled with the city receiving water for an average of 5.37 hours per day, according to a report on the status of civic issues in Mumbai released by NGO Praja Foundation on Tuesday.

Sanitation gaps persist as well, pointed out the report. Only one in four public toilet seats in Mumbai are for women. In 2023, one community toilet seat served 86 men and 81 women — far above Swachh Bharat Mission norms. Of the 6,800 community toilet blocks, 69% lacked water supply and 60% had no electricity, stated the report.

The report also flagged significant disparities in the water distribution system. While non-slum areas get the recommended 135 litres per capita per day (LPCD), slum residents receive around 45 litres. As a result, many slum households depend on private water tankers, paying approximately Rs 750 a month, compared to Rs 25.76 for metered connections, the collated data showed.

Two and a half years after BMC rolled out its Water for All policy, aimed at providing water connections to slums, unauthorised non-slum settlements, gaathans, and kolwadadas, civic data shows that 15,375 permissions have been issued so far.

Milind Mhaske, CEO of Praja Foundation, pointed out that in 2024, Mumbai faced a 15% daily water supply shortfall as the 4,664mld required demand was not fully met by BMC's 3,975mld supply due to pipeline losses. "Mumbai's water supply system struggles with significant disparities between the available water resources and how they are distributed throughout the city," he added.

The report recommended implementing 100% metered water connections in slums to allow them to access the required quantity of water as well as constructing sufficient functioning public and community toilets. "We also propose that biodegradable waste should be composted and promote the circular economy model, where waste is treated as a resource and reused, recycled, or repurposed," said Mhaske.

Among the other findings

## 'IN 2024, CITY FACED 15% WATER SHORTFALL'

► Mumbai's faces 15% daily water supply shortfall as the 4,664mld demand is not fully met by BMC's 3,975mld supply, according to data sourced from RTI queries and Mumbai Environmental Status Report

► While the Urban and Regional Development Plans Formulation and Implementation (URDPFI) guidelines by ministry of housing and urban affairs recommend 135 litres per capita per day (lpcd), the actual supply varies significantly between slum and non-slum areas

► Non-slum households receive the full 135 lpcd at a metered charge of ₹25.76 per month, which is also the total cost per person. In contrast, slum households receive only 45 lpcd, paying ₹7.13 per month for this limited supply



► Slum residents rely on pvt water tankers and other sources to make up the remaining 90 lpcd, spending an additional ₹750 per month. This brings their total monthly water cost to ₹757.13/person

### WATER SUPPLY PROJECT HASN'T ACHIEVED 100% COVERAGE YET

Despite 97% of household drinking water being sourced from tap water, the city's 24x7 water supply project, launched in 2014, has not achieved full coverage

5.37 hours Avg average daily water supply, as of 2024

Only 1 ward (Mulund) receives 24x7 water supply

71% of the city — 205 of 287 zones — gets water for 4 hours or less

### Breakup of daily water supply distribution

2 wards or 8% receive water for up to 2 hours

B | Sandhurst Road, Dongri; C | Marine Lines, Girgaum

10 wards or 42% get water for 2-4 hours A | Colaba, Fort, Marine Drive; D | Grant Road, Walkeshwar, Malabar Hill;

F-North | Sion, Matunga; H-West | Bandra (W) Khar (W), Santacruz (W); H-East | Bandra (E), Khar (E), Santacruz (E);

K-West | Andheri (W), Vile Parle (W), Jogeshwari (W);

P-North | Malad; P-South | Goregaon; R-Central | Kandivli (E), Borivli (E); R-North | Borivli (W), Dahisar

7 wards or 29% get water for 4-8 hours E | Byculla, Mazgaon; F-South | Parel, Kalachowki; G-South | Worli, Prabhadevi; G-North | Dadar, Mahim; K-East | Andheri (E), Vile Parle (E), Jogeshwari (E); R-South | Kandivli (W);

M-East | Govandi, Mankhurd

4 wards or 17% get for 8-12 hrs L | Kurla, Chunabhatti;

M-West | Chembur; N | Ghatkopar; S | Bhandup, Nahur

### Civic complaints received & resolved

1,20,296 complaints received of which 1,02,912 or 86% resolved

1,15,396 complaints received of which 88,308 or 77% resolved

2023 32 days  
2024 41 days

Avg time taken to fix complaint

## 'Decentralised waste processing could save BMC ₹1,485cr annually'

According to the Praja report, decentralised waste processing could save BMC Rs 1,485 crore annually, including Rs 883 crore spent each year on transporting waste from 24 wards to landfills and Rs 602 crore incurred for operations and maintenance at Kanjurmag landfill. In 2024, Mumbai generated nearly 24.4 lakh metric tonnes of waste — 6,656 MT per day.

As per the report, Mumbai generates about 6,300 MT of waste per day and each ward transports its waste an average of 20km to reach the landfill, at a cost of Rs 8 per MT/km. With 24 wards, the total distance travelled daily adds up to 480km, which means transporting 1 MT of waste costs Rs 3,840 per day, which works out to Rs 2.4 crore a day for 6,300MT and Rs 883 crore annually. In addition, the operations and maintenance (O&M) cost at Kanjurmag landfill — where most of the waste is sent — is Rs 3,000/MT. The landfill receives around 5,500 MT of waste every day, translating to nearly 20.1 lakh MT annually at a cost of Rs 602 crore. Together, the transport and O&M costs add up to Rs 1,485 crore a year. The report suggested that this amount could be saved if the waste is handled and treated locally within wards. TNN

of the report were that six out of eight sewerage treatment plants' biological oxygen de-

mand (BOD) failed to meet Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) norms and

that Mithi River is heavily polluted, with faecal coliform levels (5,40,000 MPN/100ml) far exceeding the CPCB limit of 2,500 MPN/100ml.

Shreyas Chorgi, manager of research and analysis at Praja Foundation, said Mumbai's recorded over 1.15 lakh civic complaints in 2024. "This is a sharp 70% increase compared to 2015. Through Mumbai's Centralised Complaint Registration System in the last 10 years, there has been a 380% increase in complaints of solid waste management, 334% rise in air pollution complaints, and 59% rise in drainage complaints. In 2024, from the total of 14,522 water-related complaints, 44% were of shortage of water. Time taken to resolve all complaints increased from 32 days in 2023 to 41 days in 2024."