

## Water Scarcity & Sanitation Challenges Persist In Mumbai Slums: Praja Report

CITY | Richa Pinto | May 21, 2025, 05:15 IST

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, gaothans, and koliwadadas, 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 of the report were that six out of eight sewerage treatment plants' biological oxygen demand (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 Mumbaikars 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."

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