

## **PRIVATISATION OF WATER SUPPLY IN K-EAST WARD – A CALL FOR CITIZENS' ACTION**

*"Apart from air, water is the only natural resource that the human species cannot do without"*

- UN Commission on Human Rights

### **Profile of K-East Ward**

- K (East) ward spread over an area of 23.5 sq/kms.
- Most populous administrative ward under the jurisdiction of MCGM, with the total population being 8,10,002<sup>1</sup>, approximately 67% of which, reside in slum communities<sup>2</sup>.
- Eastern parts of Vile Parle, Andheri and Jogeshwari fall within the purview of this ward.
- Vibrant with economic activity, this ward houses 65 major industries, 6 five star hotels, 1 international airport with domestic terminal and 2 major sports clubs.
- Water distribution network fed by 4 zonal reservoirs,
- Total connections: 21,334 of which 18,548 residential; 2,170 commercial; 616 industrial<sup>3</sup>
- About 700 families of Govind Nagar, Bajaj Nagar and MNT Compound of Andheri (East) alone, have been awaiting municipal water supply since the last 40 years.<sup>4</sup>
- K (East) ward is known for being the source of maximum revenue collection by the Water Supply Department of MCGM.

### **World Bank and MCGM proposal for Privatisation of Water Distribution in K (East) ward**

- World Bank has identified the K-East Ward to implement a Pilot Water Distribution Project
- Castalia (France) has been appointed as a consultant for undertaking a 62-weeks study to carry out an initial market sounding, pre-qualify Operators, evaluate bids and negotiate the final contract for the pilot project.
- This is a World Bank funded (as a grant) project at a cost of \$6 Lakhs (approximately Rs. 3 crores.)
- Space for consultation with citizens only provided in the form of 3 'Stakeholder Workshops' planned for the 8<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> week.
- The final bid for a selection of private operator will be issued in the 34<sup>th</sup> week and cleared in the 38<sup>th</sup> week.
- In the 62<sup>nd</sup> week the negotiation with contractor will be completed for project implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> As per Population Census – 2001 (Source: MCGM website)

<sup>2</sup> Slum Sanitation Survey for MCGM's Bombay Sewage Disposal Project (Montgomery Watson Consultants Indian Private Ltd. and YUVA, February 2001)

<sup>3</sup> Terms of Reference – World Bank Request for Proposals for Selection of Consultant for Pilot Public-Private Participation Model for Water Distribution in K-East

<sup>4</sup> Privatisation of Water Supply in K (East) Ward – What the Citizens Should Know (issued in Public Interest by Vikas Adhyayan Kendra, Mumbai)

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## Why do we need to intervene?

- Article 21 of the Constitution of India promises all its citizens the *Right to Life*
- Water is a resource that sustains life. It is NOT a marketable commodity.
- Schedule 61 (b) of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act states the 'construction and maintenance of works and means for providing a supply of water for public and private purposes' as an *Obligatory Function*, incumbent on the Corporation.
- Water privatisation experiences in other countries has meant increase in water rates (in some cases upto 650%, as was seen in Guinea), disconnection of supply to those who fail to pay, compromise in quality of supply in the long run.

## What do we do?

As Citizens it is our right to,

- Demand complete information from the MCGM about this project
- Demand complete information from your local Corporator about the plans
- Demand complete information and space for deliberation at every decision making stage of the 62-week project (right from drafting of bid to final negotiation with contractor).

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