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## NMC yet to cough up Rs 7.55 crore as water charges

NASHIK: The civic body owes Rs 7.55 crore to the water resource department for usage of water for drinking purpose from Gangapur dam. The Nashik Municipal Corporation (NMC) has, since October 2011, not entered into a fresh agreement with the water resource department over the issue and is therefore also being charged 25% more to the total water charges applicable to it for its failure to do so.

While the NMC has an agreement of using only 3,688 million cubic feet (mcft) water from Gangapur dam, which is primarily an irrigation dam, it is drawing 4,200 mcft. The water drawn from the dam during the monsoon has not been considered.

The NMC has to pay Rs 151.75 crore for a fresh agreement, which is a one-time sum for non-irrigated use of the storage capacity of the dam as it affects the irrigation of 15,173 hectares of land permanently.

From October 2011 till March this year, the water resource department has been levying a penalty of 25% on NMC's water bill, even as it repeatedly keeps reminding the civic body to enter into a fresh agreement for using water for non-irrigation purpose.

The NMC officials said the corporation was unable to pay the bills since it was short of funds.

Besides, the NMC owes Rs 7.55 crore to the water resources department as charges for water consumed from October 2011 till March this year. The civic body pumps in approximately 13 million litres of water per day at the rate of Rs 2.35 per ten thousand litres.

Close on the heels is the Nashik Thermal Power Station (NTPS, which has outstanding dues of Rs 5.64 crore, followed by the Niphad Cooperative sugar factory with pending bills of Rs 5.63 crore. Kopergaon Municipal Council also owes Rs 3.61 crore to the with the water resources department.

"The total outstanding dues with the various civic bodies, sugar factories and companies are about Rs 28.88 crore. The amount is huge and we have asked the agencies to clear them. We will soon issue notices to all of them for outstanding dues for the past three years," said M K Pokale, superintendent engineer, Command Area Development Authority (CADA), Nashik.

The issue of outstanding dues has been raised with the district collector as well as the administration. "We have raised the issue with the collector asking him to look into the case. The collectorate, in turn, has asked the agencies to settle the bills," the officer added. "We will wait for six months after which we will decide upon the future course of action," Pokale said.

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Written by Administrator  
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