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Corporation scores poorly in public deposit mobilisation

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One of the glaring underperformances that came to light during the recent meeting to review the progress of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) schemes was in mobilisation of deposit from public.

On the water supply front, the Corporation ought to have collected Rs. 20 crore from the public. But the progress report says that Corporation had not collected a paisa.

And this comes almost after four years of the start of the Pilloor dedicated water supply in 2008.

The Corporation did initiate attempts to mobilise user charges by way of increasing water tax but they were stymied.

The Corporation first proposed increase in user charges in December 2009 by suggested that the minimum monthly user

charges (up to 15,000 litres) could be Rs. 100, Rs. 6 per 1,000 litres for consumption from 15,001 to 20,000 litres, Rs. 8 per 1,000 litres for consumption from 20,001 to 1,50,000 litres, Rs. 10 per 1,000 litres for consumption from 1,50,000 litres and above and a deposit of Rs. 5,000.

The Corporation also proposed similar increase in tariff for bulk residential connections, where the width of the supply pipeline is 20 mm, and commercial connections.

The Corporation proposal said that the civic body would start collecting the charges with effect from October 1, 2010 and increase the user charges by 10 per cent every two years thereafter. And, as per law, the Corporation also invited comments from the public.

But the Council did not accord approval for the proposal. And to date it has not, despite the officials promising that they would increase the tariff to boost revenue. The reason with which the Corporation prevented the passage of the resolution was that the civic body could accord approval to the increase in charges once the civic body implemented the 24x7 water supply scheme.

Without the public getting water they would not pay and asking them to pay for water that the civic body would supply in the future was unfair. The Council derided the quantum of increase saying that the poor would suffer.

This has put the civic body in a spot of bother, as the Corporation as a JNNURM Mission City is supposed to increase the tariff to mobilise resources. Official sources said that it was for the Council to take up the resolution and pass the same.

And they were hopeful as the city residents had started enjoying 30 mld from the Pilloor dedicated water supply scheme and would soon get the entire quantum of water.

Similarly, the Corporation has also not made much headway in collecting user charges for the underground drainage project. The progress report says that the Corporation has collected only Rs. 11.04 crore of the estimated Rs. 84.53 crore. The amount collected works out to a mere 13 per cent.

Here again, the sources said that they were awaiting the

Council to collect the user charges. The Council had decided to collect the charges once the scheme was complete.