

The Hindu 23.12.2014

Local body seals illegal borewells

In a decisive move against exploitation of water sources in its limits, the Poonamallee municipality will be sealing illegal borewells on either side of Poonamallee Bypass Road.

The local body recently sealed 57 borewells that were identified to be sunk without its approval and used for commercial purpose. The Poonamallee and Seneerkuppam belt is the main source of groundwater for tankers.

On an average, about 750 tanker-loads of water are sourced from these areas where the groundwater is available at a depth of just 40 feet. Officials of the Tiruvallur district collectorate said they sealed the borewells and seized motor sets in Seneerkuppam and Thiruverkadu.

“As of now, we have identified only those along the arterial road. We cannot allow the depletion of groundwater as the demand in Poonamallee is growing,” said an official.

The local body is able to supply only 4.75 million litres of drinking water daily (mld) against the demand of 5.10 mld. The municipality has a population of 57,000 and plans to tap groundwater to meet the demand.

Lorry operators want the Tiruvallur collectorate to provide licenses to regulate groundwater drawal for commercial purposes.

P.S. Sundaram, president of Chennai Private Water Tankers Operators Association, said: "If there is a scarcity of borewell sources, lorries may have to travel to distant areas and the burden will be shifted to consumers."

The Poonamallee municipality also plans to rejuvenate five ponds polluted with sewage, including MGR Kuttai and Melma Nagar Kuttai, to serve as groundwater recharge.

Wells in the Poonamallee and Seneerkuppam belt supply much of the water for north and central Chennai

