

NGO REPORT | Praja Foundation's white paper delves into Mumbai's water crisis; it highlights vast divide in supply with one ward getting 24-hr supply, while others receiving water for 4 hrs

Water for all still remains myth in city

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With just 5.37 hours of average supply, Mumbai faced a 15% water shortfall in 2024, revealed NGO Praja Foundation's report. It pointed out that just one ward receives 24 hour supply whereas all the upscale wards get water for just four hours daily. The report also highlighted that the pollution levels of the city's water resources are at an all-time high.

On Tuesday, Praja Foundation released a white paper on 'The Status of Civic Issues in Mumbai' with a focus on water, sewerage, solid waste management, toilets and air quality. The report also included the status of Mumbai Climate Action Plan based on the BMC's environmental status report (ESR).

Turning the spotlight on a major concern, the report said that the city's supply of 3,975 million litres per day (MLD) in 2024 fell 15% short of total demand (4,664 MLD) due to 395 MLD loss. Due to

25% RISE IN CIVIC PLAINTS IN 7 YRS

1.15 lakh
Complaints in 2024

92,000
Complaints in 2017

From 48 days to 41
Decline in time taken to address issue

76%
Complaints closed in 2024

6 days
Ideal time



BMC, CPCB not on same page

Praja Foundation highlighted discrepancies in data shared by the BMC and Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the information gathered through RTI. The NGO alleged that while BMC's waste generation data reveals different figures of waste generated every day, RTI data shows higher waste generation. Similarly, the CPCB's data shows 5,400MPN/100ml fecal coliform in the Mithi river in 2022, the level rose to 5,40lakh MPN/100ml within one year, which seems like an error, said the NGO.

the shortfall, slum households received only 45 litres per capita per day (lpcd) supply against the norms set by the ministry of housing and urban affairs' Urban and Regional Development Plans Formulation and Implementation guidelines of 135 lpcd.

According to the report,

only T ward that includes Mulund received 24 hours supply last year whereas upscale wards like Colaba, Cuffe Parade, Bandra West and Andheri West received water for only up to four hours every day. Against the prescribed norm of less than 3mg/ltr biological oxygen demand (BOD) in water

bodies, the city's river, sea and creek water recorded 18mg/ltr BOD in 2023. The infamous Mithi river recorded a BOD of 210mg/ltr during the same time, the report added.

Milind Mhaske, CEO of Praja Foundation, said, "Mumbai's water supply system struggles with significant disparities between the avail-

able resources and how they are distributed." The city receives a significant supply but due to pipeline losses, only 85% of the demand is fulfilled, Mhaske said. He continued, "The slum households therefore rely on costly private tankers. The promise of 24x7 water supply remains unfulfilled as only 8% of the

city got round-the-clock water in 2024."

The report highlighted that C ward which contains no slum population, A ward with 34% slums and H-West with 39% slums recorded the highest per capita waste generation per day in 2024. On the contrary, higher slum population wards like R/South, R/North and D ward recorded the lowest per capita waste.

The report further highlighted that the BMC is far from achieving its target for bio-mining 70 lakh MT waste in the Mulund dumping ground as it could complete only 62% work till December 2024. The deadline for the humongous task is June. The report claimed that the BMC can save around Rs1,485 crore annually with a decentralised solid waste management process.

It highlighted that 41% of sanctioned posts in the BMC were vacant in 2024. The departments with the highest number of vacancies included water supply, sewerage, planning, labour and garden.