

Report 2013

Conference on Water Privatization:

Learning from India and International Experiences

Venue: Indian Social Institute, New Delhi (INDIA)

Date: 19th March 2013 #

Organised By:

Citizen's Front for Water Democracy;

Focus on the Global South; PEACE;

Water Workers Alliance &

Delhi Journalist Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The increasing trend of water privatisation has created a serious debate around the issue. While the promoters of private sector involvement in service delivery and management claim that their involvement leads to improved results in these areas, those against the privatisation show the many disadvantages of privatisation which includes lack of access to clean drinking water by a large section of the society or the common man and increased water bills, making water a commodity which needs to be purchased and no longer a responsibility of the State to ensure the provision of water for the citizens of the country.

In this context, a Conference on water privatisation was held in New Delhi on March 19, 2013 at the Indian Social Institute to discuss the challenges and the negative outcomes of water privatisation. The Conference was organised by the Citizen's Front for Water Democracy (CFWD), Focus on the Global South, PEACE, Delhi Journalist Association, Water Sewer and Sewage Disposal Employees Union (WS&SDEU) and the Water Workers Alliance. The Conference was attended by close to 300 participants and had experience sharing by various water and social activists along with eminent political leaders and representatives of Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs).

Some of the key points of deliberation were increasing commodification of water, lack of access, unconstructive outcomes of private models, corruption and the importance of organisation formation to confront these issues effectively.

The increasing commodification of water has put a large section of the society in a disadvantaged position. Mr. Rajinder Sachar, Former Chief Justice of Delhi High Court in his speech points that India, as per the constitution is a socialist democratic republic which highlights the critical role of the government as a welfare State responsible for the provision of basic necessities to its citizens. He pointed to a breach of law by the governments colluding with private players in the provision and management of water resources on grounds of efficiency and better management.

Ms. Nirmala Sharma, a social activist on gender issues highlights the apathy of the State towards the concerns of the common man. She stressed that earlier water was available as a common resource to all but now it has become a commodity, which has to be purchased either from the government or private companies through bottled water or private tankers. Women are further affected because they have to be physically present when water is supplied to households restricting their engagement in economic activities. Furthermore, it is women who have to walk long distances to get water for the family.

Much of the discussion of Session 1 focussed on significant concerns related to water as a commodity of individual companies, States or even countries as pointed by other speakers such as Mr. Vijay Kranti, Senior Journalist, Mr. Pablo Solon, Executive Director of Focus on the Global South and a water activist shared his experience of fighting water privatisation in the Bolivian cities of Cochabamba and La Paz. He stressed the importance of awareness among people regarding this issue and garnering their support to fight it. In the two cities of Bolivia unending efforts were made to increase awareness amongst people regarding the negative impacts of privatisation and once the private sector model was put in place, people began to see the impacts and revolted against it. It took a long battle to fight the government and private companies but in the end due to negotiations and resistance from the people, the government had to take back

privatisation of water in these cities. He hopes that through the efforts of people, India puts in action the tenet of United Nations Convention 2010, which stresses on water and other natural resources as a right of the people.

Session 2 focussed on the next key component of discussion which was the lack of access to water, the quality and quantity of water supplied and increased water bills because of the public-private partnership (PPP) model implemented in a few States of India namely the '24x7 Water'. Representatives from Delhi Jal Board (DJB), Trade Unions and employees of water departments from various cities in India narrated the problems related to water supply and management after the adoption of the private model. This session showcased personal and group struggles that have been undertaken in different cities to fight water privatisation. Representative from Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC) Employee's Union highlight facts that bring to debate the claim of efficiency by private companies. According to the data, water usage instead of coming down has in fact doubled. Water tariffs have also increased five times and leakage still persists. The reason for increasing privatisation is reflected in the National Water Policy, which has created a national furor. Mr. Himanshu Thakkar speaking of this policy mentioned the struggle to reverse the complete privatisation of water in many States. Other activists from Hubli, Bangalore, Latur, Khandwa cities highlight their struggles undertaken to reverse the menace of increased water bills and poor supply.

The next session stressed on the critical aspect of corruption and promotion of vested interests of a limited few involved in promotion of privatisation. Mr. Arvind Kejriwal from Aam Admi Party (AAP) believes the current water privatisation move in Delhi is reflective of a water mafia with close links to political parties and big corporate houses. While there is plenty of water available per individual as per Delhi Jal Board figures, the government to promote private sector and to meet their own personal agendas create water shortage and show revenue deficits. Later on, private companies are provided raw water by the State, use State infrastructure but collect revenues based on their management fees and profit margins. As a result, water tariff has increased almost eighteen times in the last nine years. Mr. Kejriwal is of the firm belief that privatisation is only creating further corruption and people must come together to fight this system.

Eminent activist, Ms. Medha Patkar highlights the role of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank that demand the creation of independent private water regulatory bodies and private sector management in order to receive funding, creating "imposed development". She also emphasis how people are made accustomed to drink only mineral and bottled water, so that private companies can continue to make profit. Her urge is to fight this privatisation and treat water as a natural resource over which the entire populace has a right. She urges to promote community ownership of water management and conservation.

The final session focuses on the importance of creating public sentiment on water issues and forming organisations to fight against corruption and water privatisation in a systematic way. Mr. Sanjay Sharma from Water Workers Alliance revealed staggering facts and data on profits of private companies and the levels of water provision and consumption. Mr. Ashutosh Dixit, member of Urja Senate talks of an organisation of RWAs across Delhi claiming victory on various issues concerning the welfare of people. All the speakers were of the opinion to consider water as a natural resource and fight privatisation.

AGENDA

Conference on Water Privatisation: Learning from India and International Experiences

Tuesday, 19th March 2013

Venue: Indian Social Institute, 10, Institutional Area, Lodhi Road (Behind Sai Baba Temple), New Delhi

Organised by: Citizen's Front for Water Democracy; Focus on the Global South; PEACE;
Delhi Journalist Association, WS&SDEU and Water Workers Alliance

9.00 – 09:30 **Registration**

09.30-11.00 **Inaugural Session**

Chair & Introduction: SA Naqvi (Citizen's Front for Water Democracy)

Inauguration by Retd. Justice Rajinder Sachar (Patron, WPCRC)

Speakers: Vijay Kranti (Eminent Journalist)

Nirmala Sharma (Jagriti Mahila Samiti)

Pablo Solon (Focus on the Global South & Former Bolivian
Ambassador to the UN)

11.00-12:30 **Session I: Indian Experiences in Public Private Partnership (PPP) in Water**

Chair: Kiran Shaheen (Journalist and Activist)

National Water Policy 2012: Himanshu Thakkar (South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers & People)

Nagpur: Jammu Anand (NMC Employees Union)

Hubli-Dharwar: Rasool Nadaf (Slum Janandolana Karnataka)

Gulbarga: Babu Rao Dandinkar (Slum Janandolana Karnataka)

Khandwa: Rehmat Rawat (Manthan) & Tarun Mandloi

Latur: Ashok Govindpurkar (Latur Anti Water Privatization Committee)

Bangalore: Vinay Baidur (Water Activist from Bangalore)

Followed by Q & A

12:30-01:30 **LUNCH**

01:30-03:00 **Session II: Political Opinion on Water as Human Right: Governance and Social Issues**

Chair: SA Naqvi (Citizen's Front for Water Democracy)

Arvind Kejriwal Aam Admi Party

Medha Patkar National Alliance of People's Movements

Dr. AK Arun Yuva Bharat

Followed by Q & A

03:00-04:00 **Session-III: Benefits and Losses of Water Privatisation: Possible Alternatives
An Open Debate**

Moderator & Chair: Afsar Jafri (Focus on the Global South)

Representatives from Peoples Campaign: Sanjay Sharma (Water Workers Alliance)

SA Naqvi (Citizen's Front for Water Democracy)

Ashutosh Dixit (Urja Senate)

04:00-04:10 **Vote of Thanks:** Ram Prakash Sharma (WS&SDEU)

04:10-04:30 **TEA**

04:15-05:30 **Press Briefing**

THE REPORT

Introduction

Water is the elixir of life. As a natural resource, one might perceive it to be a common good/property but the recent past over the past two decades coinciding with spread of globalisation and neoliberalism has evinced a change in the pattern of production and consumption of water. The transition has made water more of a private commodity than a common resource.

Neoliberalism promotes laissez faire replacing State led development by market led development. In the context of water, it translates the inclusion of private sector in water provision and service delivery on grounds of increased efficiency and higher revenues for the suppliers. Water privatisation is thus not only about the business of buying and selling a natural resource but also about reducing State's involvement in the provision of essential/ basic services such as food, water and health.

International aid based on the diktat of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) are promoting privatisation by extending funds for the water sector on conditions of increased privatization of water service delivery and management. According to various estimates, a minimum of one percent of GDP should be spent on water and sanitation for the MDGs (United Nations Millennium Development Goals), however in India the overall percentage of government spending has actually reduced from 0.57 percent in 2008 to 0.45 percent in 2010 (Water Aid, 2011) and an increase in investments from the private sector towards water and sanitation.

While there are instances where privatisation has improved management of service delivery and enhanced revenues of water departments, the issue of water availability, access and quality precedes any other concern. It is rather evident that with more privatisation water as a commodity has become more exclusive. Even the UN Special Rapporteur mentions that privatisation of government water and sanitation service utilities can be harmful to human rights unless proper safeguards are put in place which ensures that equity in access is maintained for even low income areas (Albuquerque, de Catarina, 2012).

There is an increasing apprehension over the issue of water exclusivity and some of these concerns will be discussed below as part of the proceedings of the meeting on Water Privatisation: Learning from National and International Experiences.

INAUGURAL SESSION

Opening Remarks by Mr. SA Naqvi, Citizen's Front for Water Democracy (CFWD)

In his opening remarks, Mr. Naqvi outlined the increasing debate on water privatisation over the past decade. "Experiences of water privatisation especially in poor and disadvantaged countries in the past have shown that over the last hundred years this model has failed on grounds of exclusivity and increased tariff base". All improvements in water sector focussed only on privatisation which has evinced failure.

Privatisation is largely promoted under the duress of IFIs and lobbies of Multi National Companies (MNC's). In India, the Planning Commission responsible for fund allocation for development emphasises public-

private participation (PPP) in most water projects. The role and scope of the model especially the involvement of the private sector is the underlined topic of deliberation and discussion for today's meeting.

Most often government claims that basic services will be provided to people by working with the people, together with the private sector. However, this is a mere myth because the involvement of people is almost negligible. According to Mr. Naqvi, "this model surreptitiously ignores people in the public aspect, includes big corporate and MNCs in the private and in the garb of partnership focuses on the international aid and finance coming from the IFIs, thus creating a nexus of power of the government, corporate and the IFI's". Most water projects based on the PPP model only satiate the greed of this nexus rather than looking to improve the distribution of water among all sections of the society equitably. In India cities such as Latur, Mysore, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Nagpur are among a few where this model has been implemented.

This meeting will discuss a few experiences from these cities to understand that ways in which privatisation has made way into the water sector in urban India and also put forth its impacts. Furthermore, it will also examine social movements and campaigns that have attempted to reverse this process. This august gathering includes water and social activists along with activists from cities where privatisation of water has taken place, who will provide us with details of the negative impacts of privatisation and talk about the struggles of which they have been a part of aiming to reverse privatisation.

Speaker 1: Mr. Vijay Kranti, Senior Journalist

In his address, Mr. Kranti, spoke of water issues as a global concern affecting the entire humanity. Not only did he mention the ill effects of privatisation but also looked at the larger context of water grabbing by private companies and also by different nations as their sovereign property over which they want to exercise exclusive rights. "The concern for Asia at the moment is Tibet" he said explaining that Tibet is the roof of the world or the water tank of the world, because it has more than ten rivers originating from that area. These rivers flow to thirteen countries of Asia, including India, Pakistan, Laos, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Myanmar to name a few providing life source for agriculture, industries and drinking water.

In 1949, China captured East Turkistan and renamed as it Xinjiang and later captured Tibet. These two areas contribute 80% of water base and account for 2/3 rd of China's mineral wealth. With the capture of major parts of Tibet by China, there exists a grave threat of water supply to these thirteen Asian countries. "The issue of Tibet is not just its own political fight but the impact of its capture will affect all the other countries of Asia" he mentioned. As per the new water policy, China intends to impose its sovereign power over the rivers by not allowing other countries of Asia to exert authority over the water supply or the course of the river originating from Tibet. They disagreed to the UN policy of 2010 and decide to use the water originating from Tibet for the use of China first and then allow for the remaining water to flow to other countries.

China built the Three Gorges Dam in 2008 with a capacity of 22 gigawatt for which 13 States and 1600 village area were drowned. People were rehabilitated in the North and hence, infrastructure provision and development of this area is also becoming a big demand. Now, they are building a dam on Brahmaputra River with a capacity of 48 gigawatt (six times as big as Bhakra dam) for development, especially the

northern region. The proponents of the dam construction mention that once the electricity is used for China, the remaining water will be allowed to flow to other countries such as India, Bangladesh etc.

This issue is grave for two reasons. “Firstly, there will be very less water remaining in the river to be supplied to India and Bangladesh once this new dam is made. Secondly, in case of a war like situation between India and China, if the water that is captured in the dam is released out at once, then the entire eastern India and Bangladesh will get completely drowned”.

It is also pertinent to understand “how China has managed to yield its powers over the entire continent and have created immense wealth that allows it USD \$635 billion for water schemes”. Historically, during the Cold War period, President Nixon of the USA in order to arrest development of the then Russia, supported China’s development due to its key strategic geographic position. The people of China were rehabilitated and were provided technological trainings for industrial development and opened trade with them. “After the end of cold war, China developed very quickly and by the 1990’s, it emerged as a one of the fastest growing economies joining the league of other major Asian countries such as South Korea and Japan and the same China has become a Frankenstein monster for the USA and for the entire region” he exclaimed. Now China is providing technology to smaller countries of Asia such as Cambodia and Laos to build dams but in turn the electricity generated is bought by China for its own development at a much lower cost. The reason for promoting development in China, their model of development has been discriminatory and oppressive, so their own people are now beginning to revolt against their own government. Therefore, in order to resist any uprising, the Chinese government wants to ensure proper development of the area such as the Gobi desert by providing basic and good quality infrastructure.

In conclusion, Mr. Kranti explained that if the issue of Tibet’s freedom is not taken as a priority by the Asian countries, then the future of Asia is in grave danger if the water polices of China remains the same. “They will continue to extract every drop of water for their own development and leave the other countries, dependent on the rivers originating from Tibet, high and dry.”

Speaker 2: Ms. Nirmala Sharma (Jagriti Mahila Samiti)

In her speech, Ms. Nirmala Sharma, a renowned social activist working on gender issues brought to fore the ill effects of privatisation especially for the marginalised and the weaker sections of the society, women. She mentioned that “everyone, especially women are suffering except for a minority of 5-10 percent of the population that have access to services and those who are largely associated with governments and big corporates”. The common Delhite is suffering. While the Delhi government has authorised many colonies but there is no water provision for them. Women’s drudgery has particularly increased as they carry buckets of water from tankers to their homes. “The other side effects are their inability to join the workforce as they have to be present at the time of tanker arrival else the entire day the family would not have water. In addition, this also affects the education of their children due to lack of funds. Additionally, water bills have increased manifold and those who earn paltry amounts cannot afford it”. Governments don’t support and provide basic necessities such as food and water to the very population on whom they are dependent for their electoral victory.

Another important reason for the spread of private sector is due to the lack of clean, accessible water and an imposed addiction to bottled water. "Earlier at every railway station, there were water tanks, hand pumps and taps from where people had water but these days, no such small tanks or taps are available from where water can be had. It has been replaced by bottled water and has been ingrained in the minds of people to associate bottled water with purity and cleanliness". Moreover, water purifiers have become a big business. An estimate suggests that more than 1 crore (10 Million) water purifiers have been installed in Delhi over the last few years. However, how does a poor or a lower middle income person afford a water purifier? All that they get is impure and polluted water she said. Pollution has also increased because of the extensive use of plastic and chemicals for treating and packaging of water bottles besides the ever increasing use of chemicals as part of industrial waste and agricultural waste. Therefore, the common man in his daily life is subjected to this dirty water because the government, who is responsible for the provision of basic facilities, are shirking away from their responsibilities by outsourcing water provision to the private sector that is only concerned with profit making and hence, those who can pay can avail clean water and those who cannot are left to suffer with only increased water bills.

In conclusion, Ms. Sharma encourages people to make governments more responsible and discourage the use of bottled water. Water is a human right and no person should be devoid of it. We must extend our support to those who are fighting against this privatisation of water and support the use of alternative methods through which water can be stored and supplied. We must work for the common work because we are the base of the society.

The market system should not be given the reins to control water and it must not be able to dictate when and how much water an individual can or should consume. The market is not an apolitical, asocial concept. On the contrary, markets are controlled by a few powerful people, whose only agenda is to maximise their profit and hence our struggle against this entire system of markets, private players must go on, so that every individual has the access to clean drinking water.

Speaker 3: Mr. Pablo Solon (Focus on the Global South)

Mr. Pablo Solon from Bolivia shared his international experience of reversing privatisation of water in the Bolivian cities of La Paz and Cochabamba. He started his speech by exclaiming that "Privatisation of water has been completely reversed in our country. There is no privatisation of water at all. The reason why privatisation is rejected is because its primary agenda is profit not welfare".

Due to the primary goal of enhanced profits, all private enterprises aim to invest less and earn more profit. Talking of Cochabamba city, Mr. Solon mentioned that even before private companies were to take over water supply and management, water tariff increased by the inexplicable figure of 300%. Thus people came out in the open and opposed privatisation. People demanded to know why private companies were investing using tax payer's money, and if so then what was the advantage of having a private company take over. Secondly, people also observed that private companies only wanted to invest in areas where people could afford paying taxes. They were not interested to invest in poor or slum areas where people could not pay and hence they would not be able to recover their costs and make profit.

In the capital city of La Paz when people from poor areas complained about irregularity of water supply, then the private companies offered to go on a PPP model, wherein the private company will invest in areas where people could pay returns. In those areas where people could not pay, the State was encouraged to invest, while the private company would only take over the management. However, people believed that if the State was investing, then why a private company should manage it, if State was investing then State municipality should take over the management.

The private sector pretended to follow a pro-poor approach but in fact the people who could pay got good service while those areas where people couldn't pay did not good services or clear water. This led to a growing discontent among the people and they began to protest. So "the first point of discontentment against privatisation was that it was promoting inequality among the haves and the have-nots".

Secondly, SUEZ, the private French company that was awarded the contract inherited basic infrastructure from the municipality such as water treatment plant, dams and other such resources, which were squeezed to a maximum to generate greater revenues, while the company did not invest in it at all. After the contract was over, the infrastructure was left in such a poor condition that it could not be used again.

Finally, in La Paz when people realised that the private company made USD \$3 million profit annually, they began to ponder that if the same profit could be spent in the development of poor areas instead of giving it to a French company, the development of their country would be greater. Consequently, people decided to get together and organise themselves into a coordinated consortium, called 'coordinator of all organisations' that stood against water privatisation. People were made to realise that the problem of water was not limited to a few. It was a common problem for all sections of the society be it the indigenous people, peasants, students, women and working class. Therefore, all organisations that wanted to fight this privatisation including trade unions, peasant organisations, and student groups came under this umbrella organisation and raised one slogan "water is life, and it cannot be privatised".

A campaign was developed to inform people in the neighbourhoods (similar to Residential Welfare Associations) describing the ill effects of privatisation which included division among the society and the large profit accruing nature of these companies with least investment from their side. Once the campaign and movement gained momentum, people organised themselves into small assemblies and gave government an ultimatum to revoke the contract of private companies. The government was given a few days to put this into action. "We went through a democratic process and decided to vote for or against privatisation. The results were clear, people did not want privatisation. However, the government did not accept this referendum, so we did a blockade. All neighbourhoods stood up against the deregulation of water services. All roads were closed and a fight with the army ensued. Some activists were killed in Cochabamba but finally the contracts of the private companies were revoked first in Cochabamba and later in La Paz.

This victory gave a ray of hope to the people. Slowly all natural resources and essential services such as gas, oil and all other natural resources were nationalised. Even the government is nationalised and "today we have a president representing the majority (66 percent) of our population which is indigenous". The constitution is also changed and no natural resource such as water, oil can ever be privatised. There will be

community ownership and management of resources. We wanted to “declare water as human right to the outside world”, so as an Ambassador to the United Nation, “I along with my partners made a campaign to get approval by the UN for water as a human right that cannot be commodified”. We achieved this success in 2010, when UN Special Rapporteur mentions that privatization of government water and sanitation service utilities can be harmful to human rights unless proper safeguards are put in place which ensures that equity in access is maintained for even low income areas. India agreed to the charter but continues to promote privatisation of water.

“We have to continue the fight against privatisation but also for the rights of water itself”. Water as such is being destroyed by climate change, international policy and by construction of dams. We have to preserve the cycle of water if life has to sustain on the earth. In conclusion, Mr. Solon hopes that India is able to continue and win their struggle against water privatisation. He concluded by saying “For both water and for ourselves, we must end water privatisation”.

Speaker 4: Mr. Rajinder Sacchar – Former Chief Justice of Delhi High Court

Mr. Sacchar has been a veteran activist and started the discussion by highlighting the injustices that has engulfed our society in many different forms. In context of water privatisation he mentioned that as per the Indian constitution India is Socialist Republic. Any person with a political economy background or even with slight honesty will understand that private sector cannot flourish in a socialist republic. “Either India is not a socialist republic or if it is, which the constitution states, then privatisation, especially of natural resources such as water is absolutely incorrect”. Even the Supreme Court of India, has in many instances passed a verdict that natural resources such as air and water are a public trust, which cannot be given in the hands of private ownership. The exact verdict reads as follows “the resources like air, sea water and forests have such a great importance for the people as a whole that it will be totally unjustified to make them subject to private ownership. State has committed a breach of public trust by leasing these natural resources to private companies”. This decision has been repeated time and again because the government keeps moving away from this basic tenet though the constitution clearly mentions that “State is trustee of natural resources which are of public use and enjoyment. Public is beneficiary of land, water and air, and state has the responsibility to protect these resources”.

This increase in privatisation is a result of globalisation, which promotes privatisation. He mentioned that even national banks are privatised, because they follow US policy. Furthermore, India is also keen to have private or national industries to be owned and managed by private banks. This privatisation is also getting extended to water. “If India has agreed to United Nations Charter of Water as a human right, then extensive privatisation must be stopped”. According to him, “if government does not protect human rights, then it must not stay in power”. The government is trying to deceive public in the name of efficiency and better management. History is replete with cases of privatisation as a failed model. Examples of France, Vancouver and Columbia can be mentioned for reversing privatisation.

He pointed out for the public to become more aware of the issue of privatisation. The government is levying taxes and huge service charges on water consumption, which are in reality not even applicable.

Accordingly, in Delhi, water bills include service charges but no one is aware why a service charged is levied? We need to understand that water is our right and we must fight for our right.

He raised a slogan that “water privatisation must be stopped”. If government is incapable of providing basic facilities such as drinking water to the poor and the common man, then that government does not deserve to be in power. He cited the case of South Africa where the government gives provision of free drinking to the poor but in the case of India “we are not even treated well as humans because our human rights are not guaranteed to us”. He concluded by reminding us of our power as voters and we must exercise our rights to preserve our rights. If we manage to reverse privatisation, it will be a great victory for us.

Question and Answer:

Among the audience, there was a question raised to Mr. Sacchar that if the constitution has so clearly opposed privatisation of natural resources, then would this privatisation of water not account to contempt of court? Mr. Sacchar and Mr. Naqvi clarified that a petition has already been filed with the apex court but Mr. Sacchar was of the opinion that people must come together to fight this evil rather than being completely dependent on the courts. While the matter is subjudice, we must make every effort to garner public support against this privatisation.

SESSION - I

The second session was chaired by Ms. Kiran Shaheen a renowned journalist and activist. This session focussed on experience sharing of people who have been involved in the implementation of PPP model (addressed as 24x7 Water) who would discuss the ways in which the negative impacts of privatisation has affected the common man. In addition, this session also showcased personal and group struggles that have been undertaken by the speakers to fight water privatisation in their own States. Ms. Shaheen started the session by claiming the ways in which natural resources like water, gas, oil are slowly coming under private ownership, very shortly “our life will become privatised which will eventually restrict our freedom. She then introduced the speakers of the session.

Speaker 1: Himanshu Thakkar (South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People)

Mr. Thakkar has conducted research on dams and is a reputed water activist. He started the session by talking about 2012, Rashtriya Jal Niti (National Water Policy), which is yet not finalised. According to him there was a national water council meeting held in December 2012, which was attended by Chief Ministers and other relevant ministers of State and senior bureaucrats to decide the water policy of India. The draft policy document clearly stated that water must be privatised and the government should completely withdraw from water provision services. The draft came under serious scrutiny by water activists and was made public in Jan 2013. As a result of many discussions and deliberations “we managed to put pressure on the government to reverse the clause of government’s non-involvement in water provision”. However, the document still retains the option to implement a PPP model in States which consider it a logical approach to be adopted if water has to be provided to all.

The clause 12.3 of the draft document while on the one hand states that water resources should be managed by the community and in the next paragraph it talks of the PPP. This highlights the dubious nature of the document. "The point of community owned and managed resources are merely lip service, the larger agenda is to placate the private sector and advance privatisation as much as possible" he believes. Another crucial aspect of the document is the way privatisation is promoted very tacitly and tactfully. In the document there is a clause for all States to set up a water regulatory authority. People do not associate a water regulatory authority with privatisation. However, private parties want no involvement of State in water regulation or tariff setting. Therefore private companies are looking for the establishment of independent water regulatory authorities, which is why it is mentioned in the draft document.

This concept of water regulation is promoted by the World Bank (WB) and is implemented in the State of Maharashtra, where WB is giving loan to the water sector. If the consequences of regulation are carefully examined the failure of water regulation becomes rather noticeable. Since the formation of the water regulation authority in 2005, Maharashtra has witnessed the biggest irrigation scam worth approximately Rs. 75,000 crores, where the money spent on irrigation has increased manifold but in reality not one extra acre of land has been irrigated. Secondly, Maharashtra suffers the worst drought conditions. Though the level of precipitation (in terms of millilitres) has not been as bad as previous years before water regulation, it still suffers from major drought conditions because of the water policy of the State. Thirdly, Maharashtra has the biggest and almost 40 percent of the total dams of India, yet the water shortage is so severe.

All these facts impart credence to the fact the following the WB policy prescriptions might not be the best solution to manage water resources for the people of this country. Hence, we must resist the water regulation authority. The water policy is not the first step for privatisation. In 2005, under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) in the 11th Five Year Plan, States were given Rs. 70,000 crores for urban reform on condition of adopting the PPP model for water provision. Both, the ruling and opposition parties favour this privatisation. He concluded by reiterating Mr. Solon's point of saving water and rivers, else life would perish.

Speaker 2: Jammu Anand [Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC) Employee's Union]

Mr. Anand shared his experience and struggle against PPP model which is adopted in Nagpur city of Maharashtra. In the first phase of water privatisation, 64 cities were selected for the pilot project called "Water 24x7" which included Nagpur. Prior to the implementation of this PPP model, an independent audit was undertaken by a private firm on water services in Nagpur. The findings of this report laid grounds for the adoption of the PPP model. While the credibility of this audit is still obscure, the two major outcomes of the report were firstly, that 50 percent water of Nagpur goes unaccounted and secondly 45 percent of water supply gets wasted due to leakage.

The report mentioned that the water department was inept in arresting these two problems. Additionally, the Corporation lacked political will to improve the functioning and finally the department was running into loss. In 2007, money spent by water department amounted to Rs. 90 crore, whereas the revenue generated was Rs. 50 crore, making it a total loss of Rs. 45 crores. To fill this deficit and to improve the management, the report recommended a JNNURM directed pilot of the PPP model in selected zones of Nagpur. At

present there are 10 zones in Nagpur of which Dharampet zone was selected to pilot this model. “We questioned this decision because if PPP was an answer to the crisis, then it should be tested in crisis prone areas instead of Dharampet, which had the least revenue losses”. However, on closer examination it was soon realised that to achieve and showcase success of the PPP model, they chose to implement it in a comparatively safer zone, so that there is greater acceptability for further expansion.

After 24x7, JNNURM claimed that people will get good quality of water. Secondly, water leakage will be reduced because of better technology and management. Third, the urban poor will be provided with better water and water services. Additionally, if water is available all the time (24x7), people won't store/hoard and therefore the supply will increase. Lastly, there would be uninterrupted water supply in the city. They also boasted that under the 24x7 water provision; water supply would promote equity unlike the earlier water provision system which was inequitable on grounds of caste and class differences. According to Mr. Anand “the interesting point to observe is that while there would uninterrupted water supply on one hand, on the other those who will use more will get more water. In terms of cross subsidies, the rich will receive subsidised water on the cost of higher paid water by the urban poor”.

The results of the pilot are not encouraging. Analyses represent certain facts, given below:

- In the demo zone, 97 Million Litres per Day (MLD) water is supplied currently as compared to the 41 MLD supplied before this model was adopted. One of the assurances given was that water usage will come down after 24x7 model is adopted because water will not be stored but factsheet show that today instead of water usage coming down, the supply has in fact doubled.
- After switching over to 24x7, water tariff increased five times. It is claimed that revenues of the water department has increased but this is because the tariff has also increased.
- The assurance of leakage reduction is also not fulfilled. There are 17,000 new connections in all households and connections are 100 percent metered. Even then 30 percent leakage still persists. If all connections are changed and every drop of water is accounted for, then what explains this 30percent leakage?
- According to the agreement, PPP model had to evince success for further replication and up scaling. To achieve this, the modus operandi of the government was to award NMC for good implementation even when hardly 40percent work was completed. By the time 70percent work was complete, another award was accorded. The third award received is for the best city by ABP channel on parameters such as public transport, liveable city and finally green city but no mention of water supply and management.
- The PPP model was a dream project of Mr. Nitin Gadkari of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), though the same party oppose water privatisation in Delhi. The entire power nexus and vested interests came out in the open when NMC decided to upscale the 24x7 model to the entire city. Earlier the contract for water supply and management was given to French company Veolia, but when it came to spreading it to the entire city, the French company was pressurised to form a consortium, through which a small company Vishwa Raj Environmental Private Limited (belonging to political leaders) along with Veolia created a new company called Orange City. Today they are the sole suppliers of water in the city.

It is evident that there is corruption involved in water provision and services under the 24x7 model. This model cannot be replicated in other parts of the city because it would require double the amount of water that is used currently in Nagpur. Secondly, all agreements are in favour of private companies. Today NMC expenses on water department is Rs. 213 crores annually, of which Rs. 78 crore will be paid to the operator against 250 MLD of water. All other expenses such as raw water, electricity, water treatment are to be borne by the NMC. He concluded by saying that "it is not a water 24x7 scheme; rather it is loot 24x7 and we must fight this".

Speaker 3: Rasool Nadaf (Slum Janandolan Samiti, Hubli, Karnataka)

Mr. Nadaf spoke of the many challenges faced by the slum dwellers of Hubli-Dharwad after the implementation of the PPP model in the twin city. In 2005, the 24x7 water project was started in Hubli-Dharwad, and the responsibility of water distribution was handed over to the Karnataka Water Supply and Drainage Board (KUWS&DB). Of the total 67 wards in that area, this model is implemented in 8 wards of the twin city. Since the inception of this model, not only the water bills but our electricity bill has also increased.

For those areas under the demo zones for 24x7 water supply, there is a considerable increase in water bills which is quite unaffordable for us to pay. Also, we (slum dwellers) does not consume the same level of water as the rich, so we decided to go as a group to put our case forward to the State officer. The officer at the water department rejected our plea and shrugged us off.

In Hubli- Dharwad the minimum monthly charge (for unmetered water connections as well as water use of less than 10,000 litres) was first increased from Rs. 45 to Rs. 60 in 2005. In June 2007, tariff was raised from Rs. 60 to Rs. 90 with retroactive effect from April 2006. In the demo zone, we were promised water at a minimum of Rs 90, but the bills began running high and today many households owe the companies Rs. 10,000 and more as they are unable to pay the high bills. Slum dwellers in these zones have received notices from the Water Board (KUWS&DB) asking us to pay the water bills which runs into thousands of rupees or face disconnection. More than 1500 households have received the bills for Rs 10,000-Rs 20,000 each. Since the time the water board took over water supply in 2005 till 2009, it did not send any bills, now it is asking residents to pay the arrears and offered to waive the interest on arrears. But we are unable to pay the arrears and all our appeals to the authorities had not helped.

We decided to fight this privatisation and started a campaign informing people of different slums and close by neighbourhoods about the perils of privatisation, which included increased bills even with less water consumption. We formed an organisation and appealed to Block officials. With no positive results in sight, we burnt our bills and since then have not paid our water bills. "We have been questioned many times but we always retort by asking the water officials how do they make a bill amounting to Rs. 10-20,000 for a slum dweller"? We also took out papers associated with 20 wards through RTI and submitted it to the Zila Officer and asked him to see the bill of every individual, which amounted between Rs. 10,000 - Rs. 20,000. We also showed our identity cards to prove that we were slum dwellers and to receive and pay bills worth Rs. 15,000 was preposterous.

After much discussion and several meetings with the private company and State officials, we were also offered reduced water bills and tariff but the remaining amount of bills remained considerably high, which we needed to pay if we wanted water in our colonies. We refused this offer and organised members from other areas of the region and from all over Karnataka to refuse the 24x7 water facility. We wanted eight hour supply of clear water and not this 24x7 water supply. This model extracted water from all the natural resources available to the poor such as ponds and bore wells, leaving everything dry and sparing no option for us but to succumb to this plan. Our (Hubli-Dharwad) population is over 8 lakhs (.8 million) which requires 0.8 mc units but even with 24x7 plan there is only 0.2 mc unit of water available. The officers say water is stored and one can only get water 24x7 if they join the scheme and pay their bills. The point of emphasis is that there is no proper work done under PPP model. "They are pressurising us to take up this model". He questioned that if it is true that the private companies are spending so much money then why is there no water in the slum areas? According to him, "privatisation is only a gimmick to convince people for better water supply but in fact, it is creating further divide between the rich and poor".

Speaker 4: Baburao Dandinkar (Slum Janandolan Samiti, Gulbarga, Karnataka)

Gulbarga is on the Maharashtra-Karnataka border. There are two rivers flowing in this area, one being Benithera and the other, Bhima. In 2006, the Block officer conducted a meeting and told the local population and other officials that they were going to invest in water for improved quality and supply along with increased revenue. The officer said "If we invest in 24x7 PPP model then it will benefit everyone". Most people were not aware of the system and the party people agreed to this model except the members of Communist Party of India (CPM), who were not keen to have this model. Even in the slum area, people were not keen to have this 24x7 water scheme but they were convinced of the benefits and the private companies got a local NGO to talk on their behalf.

As a result, people gave their consensus and in 2006, the 24x7 model was implemented. A meter was installed in every home but it started counting even before water started coming from the taps. As a result, water bills went up to Rs. 2000 but there was hardly any water. The people felt cheated and disheartened with this new system. Consequently, we decided to stand against this privatisation model.

In Gazipura slum, water connection was cut due to non-payment of water bills. We tried to put our case to the companies that an individual earning Rs. 100 per day cannot afford to pay Rs. 2000 for water, which they do not consider a commodity. We even got the local police to intervene on our behalf in regard to the problem of water bills, but the private companies continued to cut the water supply to the slum dwellers of Gazipura till they cleared their dues. The common public is harassed in the name of 24x7 water supply but we have continued our agitation against it and are not paying bills even now. He concluded by saying that "PPP is a complete failure, especially when they make you believe it is a pro-poor initiative. It is all a scheme by all governments and private companies, who want to earn maximum profit at the cost of the poor farmer!"

Speaker 5: Rehmat Rawat (Manthan, Madhya Pradesh)

Mr. Rehmat started the discussion by reiterating Mr. Sachchar's point of India being a socialist republic. In the same tune, in July last year, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shivraj Singh Chauhan made grand statements in a public gathering about not adopting water privatisation for Madhya Pradesh. However, in reality the picture on the ground is very different. In fact this model of PPP has been adopted in 60 cities. Under the JNNURM there is an Urban Infrastructure Development Schemes for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT) that is applied to various towns in Madhya Pradesh. At present this scheme has been adopted in 60 cities and towns of MP. 47 cities of these 60 have adopted water schemes as part of the UIDSSMT activities worth Rs. 990 crore. Khandwa and Shivpuri both have adopted PPP model. Khandwa is the first city which has adopted PPP. It becomes pertinent to explain the old model of water system of Khandwa to understand the ramifications of the PPP model.

Khandwa is an old city with a 110 years old system of water supply. Water comes through gravity without the use of electricity. Even now the system works perfectly and according to CPHE reports the total consumption of water is not more than 10 MLD for a population of 2 lakh. Average rainfall supply ensures 15 MLD, thus there is more water than required. However, even with a surplus availability of water, the government is intending a new water scheme for Khandwa. A water pipe of 52 kilometers length has been installed to provide water to the town. The scheme is worth Rs. 116 crore and the first bill that will be raised, once this scheme is started will amount to Rs. 7.5 crore as compared to the current bill estimate of Rs. 3.5 crores. Based on today's discussions we can imagine the increase in water bills that the people would have to endure. In addition, similar claims have been made about 24x7 water supply and good quality water but when people realised the ill effects of privatisation, they have come together to protest against this system.

Another problematic aspect is the contract that is signed for privatisation of water utilities. It is a perfect remedy to completely destroy the public services of the city. As soon as this will start, the self dependency of the city will be over. In this 150 pages document, it is clearly stated that once privatisation commences, water cannot be augmented by anyone except for the company. If there is a tube well in a house and water level goes down and augmentation is required, it will not be allowed. Another problem is that in case of any problem such as bursting of the pipe due to natural calamity, there will be no source of water for the people of Khandwa for at least eight days, since all wells, ponds and other water bodies would be completely dried up or grabbed by land mafia.

In fact three out of the four private companies operating in Khandwa themselves believe that it would not be practical to privatise water services and revenues would not be recovered. It should just be managed better, subsidy should be provided for improvement yet the government is bent upon going for privatisation. Most people are told that companies are professional and will be responsible for better management of water services but in reality the company managing the account, is not competent. The document of agreement was only a draft contract which was signed on and many technical details that were to be incorporated have not been done. This shows the callousness of the government with regards to the selection of private company to manage this work.

In conclusion, Mr. Rehmat mentioned that even though the Hon Chief Minister proclaimed that he would not let water be privatised in Madhya Pradesh in his lifetime has signed an agreement with the World Bank for a new Chief Minister scheme after the end of UIDSSMT for an amount of Rs. 2000 crore. In this scheme, privatisation will start from the beginning instead of a trial period in order to appease the World Bank.

Speaker 6: Ashok Govindpurkar (Latur Anti Water Privatisation Committee)

Mr. Govindpurkar started by highlighting that Latur is politically a very sensitive area. Many leaders hail from Latur district. In 1985, he became a corporator at the Latur Municipal Corporation and got associated with Janata Dal Party but when privatisation started in 2006, they got to know that water losses should be given to MJB (government municipality) for better water management but as soon as Mr. Vilasrao Deshmukh became the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, he was convinced of privatising water supply for increased efficiency. Based on the tenders submitted, a Delhi based company named SPML was handed over the charge to manage water services in Latur. This decision to hand over the MJB to this specific private company for a period of 10 years was taken by the CM directly and to oppose it was unfathomable.

No one stood up against privatisation. It took great effort from his side to generate awareness among people about the ill effects of privatisation and to stand against privatisation of MJB. This included press conference and interactions with senior journalists. With some support they tried to petition in the courts and also carried out social mobilisation. However, it was only with the change in the government that they were finally able to reverse this decision.

The fight against privatisation was carried out in three phases. In the first phase they informed people about the agreement between MJB and SPML wherein investment would be carried out by Municipal Corporation and the loan taken from banks would also be paid by the corporation. However, tariffs would be decided by the company, so the MJB would be answerable to the people but have no authority over the management and tariff setting. Finally people began to realise the problems with privatisation and most government parties supported their campaign against privatisation except the Congress. They distributed pamphlets in temples and mosques which stated the positive and negative aspects of privatisation to help people make informed choice on this subject.

After the campaign gained momentum, Mr. Vilasrao Deshmukh, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, finally agreed to have a meeting with us to discuss a strategy for cooperation. However, the Company did not want to make any adjustment and were not leaving much option for the people but to accept privatisation. As a result, tariff increased by three times. People had to pay Rs. 2400 instead of Rs. 800. Privatisation started in the CM's area but when people got increased water bills, they realised that they were deceived by the big claims made by the companies with regards to clean and continuous water and finally they joined the campaign against privatisation. After the CM changed, "we continued our campaign and it is the people who have to decide for or against this system. For any political struggle we need the support of people instead of the courts".

In 2010, once the Corporation was formed, it had to make a new agreement with the company. They did not accept the agreement and also resisted the installation of meters and adopted complete defiance by not paying water bills. They blamed the company for not being able to provide water, which was their responsibility. The company was also running at a loss because meters could not be installed. A stalemate

followed and after the Corporation election, privatisation became the most important topic of discussion. Before the Vidhan Sabha (State Legislature) elections, Mr. Deshmukh personally came to Latur and withdrew support to the private company. This happened due to their political struggle and today they are giving water without private company involvement. Mr. Govindpurkar concluded by saying “I am very proud of our struggle and all we need is to create public sentiments against such evils and the government will have to take back such measures of privatisation”.

Speaker 7: Vinay Baidur (Water Activist, Bangalore)

Mr. Baidur critiqued the concept of ‘world class cities’, which he believes is the garb through which governments and private sector collude to earn maximum profits by exploiting the common man. According to him activist struggles have shown that government has reached an impasse best described as ‘policy paralysis’. “Many political parties blame wrong policies for inefficiency, but it is the opposition to the policies which is slowing down the implementation of policies. This is an integrated view of global forces, government, private sector, banks and other lobbies that infrastructure dependent economic growth is pushing for creation of lobbies in every sector”. These lobbies are influenced and integrated with international lobbies and get promoted and integrated in the infrastructure development schemes of developing countries by making common masses believe that our cities would be made world class cities with the introduction of private services for basic necessities as their efficiency and management skills are far superior.

The World Bank and the JNNURM indirectly promote lobbies through infrastructure development projects. “It is a common mantra chanted by all politicians and private companies”. The notion of world class cities is promoted with services such as railway metro, 24x7 water and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) almost becoming synonymous with a world class city.

However, due to many people’s struggles in different parts of the country against foreign investment and intervention especially in the case of water privatisation, the central water policy of ‘24x7 water’ is being challenged by thirteen State governments leading to the non-adoption of water policy. In his concluding remarks, Mr. Baidur is of the belief there is no need for water privatisation in our cities or even under the current constitutional framework/regime. Therefore, Central government has appointed a chairperson for 14 Central Financial Commissions and one of the leading aspects of the commission would be to de-politicise water. He believes we must oppose the world class cities concept in which the State is reducing its spending on public welfare services including health, education, water and social protection, and promoting privatisation and lobbies for only profit making.

Speaker 8: Kiran Shaheen (Journalist and Activist)

To conclude the session, Ms. Shaheen, the chair, tried to summarise a few major points of this session. Mr. Himanshu and Mr. Sachchar reminded us the ways in which our freedom is getting constrained and basic necessities such as water, land and oil are commodified and made into market oriented goods that need to be bought and sold. This is an indication of dissolution of our social system and human rights.

- If India claims to be a democracy, then we must pass the litmus test of transparency, participation and accountability. These aspects are a hallmark of any functional democracy. Unfortunately, India does not come close to any of these parameters especially in the case of water democracy.

Furthermore, even after signing the UN convention in 2010, whereby water is a human right and cannot be privatised, the government is still continuously promoting privatisation, which is also unconstitutional.

- The implementation of water policy through privatisation is showing major loopholes on the ground in the provision of drinking water to the poorest of poor.
- The concept of PPP is largely misused. The public which should ideally represent the interest of its people is in reality not doing so. Only the vested interests of a few political leaders are upheld.
- Our struggle needs to be politicised and could be short term, medium term and long term depending on the condition of field reality.
- Foreign companies can be used for technical expertise but cannot be handed over the entire right to manage and run it.
- There is a 350 percent increase in water tariffs. Since 2009-11, all infrastructure works have not necessarily led to water supply increase or waste water management. Only infrastructure was built based on which corporate sector decided tariffs, amount of water supply to different areas and rate at which water will be sold. In the end, there is no clue how water is going to reach the poor of our nation.

SESSION - II

Session 3 was chaired by Mr. SA Naqvi focussing on the political opinion on water as a human right. Eminent speakers of the session were Mr. Arvind Kejriwal of the Aam Admi Party, Ms. Medha Patkar, social activist from National Alliance of People's Movement gave a reality check on issues of water and raised a slogan against water capture and privatisation, followed by Dr. A.K. Arun from Yuva Bharat providing insights in the formulation of organisations and sound strategies to confront the problems of privatisation.

Speaker 1: Arvind Kejriwal (Leader, Aam Admi Party)

Mr. Kejriwal flagged critical issues regarding water provision in Delhi. He mentioned that in the last nine years, the water rates have increased by a phenomenal 18 times. In 2004, a middle class family with a consumption of 45 kilolitres per month paid Rs. 64 as water bill. Now the same family, with the same level of consumption has to pay Rs. 1355. "This inflation in water prices is very disturbing and problematic for a middle class family" he said.

In the last one and a half months, his party has conducted 51 Vidhan Sabha meetings. The one major issue that dominates the discussion is that of increasing water bills without increased supply of water. All major political parties make grand claims to provide water to each and every city and village of India but "if the government has been inept in meeting the daily needs of the capital city for water, how are they dreaming of equitable water distribution to all cities and villages" he questioned. He went on to reveal that public figures show that 840 million gallons per day (MGD) is available to Delhi with a population of 1.5 crores. If we divide water available with the population, then 250 litres of water is available per day, per capita.

This amount of water is sufficient to meet the daily requirements of each and every individual of Delhi. A comparison to England and Germany's per litre per capita availability makes this point even clearer. In

England, there is 150 litres per capita per day availability of water and in Germany the amount is 130 litres. Even then, there is interrupted and 24x7 availability of water for the people. Then why in the case of Delhi which gets 250 litres per capita per day there is such a shortfall?

According to State officials, this is because more than 50 percent of water is leaked. In that case “if 420 MGD leaks, then Delhi would be flooded. To further counter the argument, underground leakage is attributed to the cause. However, even on that account, the under water table must increase if there is so much leakage underground but that is also not true, and finally even if 50 percent water is leaking, there should still be 125 litres available per capita per day, which is sufficient based on the comparison with other international cities. However, if none of this is currently happening in the city, then where exactly is the water going?

He affirms there is water shortage in the city, yet private tankers always have water available. This is reflective of a water mafia with close links to political parties and big corporate houses of Delhi. He is personally aware that if a polling booth reflects voting for another candidate than the current leader/ party, then the water supply is cut from that area. Thus, the issue of water is in fact a political matter he confirms. Vested interest and large profits are the reason for privatisation of water without care for the common man or the *aam admi*.

- The level of water corruption is staggering. An example of Sonia Vihar was discussed, where Ms. Shiela Dikshit, Chief Minister of Delhi installed a French machine for cleaning raw water. (Set up a water treatment plant of 140 MGD to treat water and contract was given to a French company Degremont France in the year 2000). According to official data when 90 MGD is pumped for cleaning, it gives out 140 MGD of water. The government says that 140 MGD is realised but through the RTI (Information sought by CFWD). It was found that only 85 MGD is released from the machine and the rest of MGD of water is put for bogus bill. On getting this information, the CM ordered to change the pipelines of the area blaming the shortfall on leakage. An amount of Rs. 516 crore was allotted for pipe repairing to the same private company but there was no need for it. This is the way a tax payer’s money gets eaten up by private companies in conjunction with the government. In Nangloi, raw water and electricity was provided for free to the company, which would treat the water, supply it and collect bills. This work takes Rs. 4.60 per kilo litres with the DJB but government is giving private companies Rs. 15 for the same. Consequently, water bills are increasing.

Mr. Kejriwal is of the firm belief that privatisation is only creating further corruption. First the public sector (government) was considered corrupt so privatisation was increased to counter the same, but in fact privatisation made matters worse. “We need to trust the people of this country and work on a community owned and managed model in the right spirit”. He question why private companies are needed once water is put in the machine. After the input, water will flow through pipes on its own. Companies are kept only for collection of bills which can also be done by people ward wise through RWA instead of a French company. It is evident that public and private collude against the common people to serve their own economic and political interests. Boring wells are also politicised, water is given according to voting and those who vote against ruling party as in case of tankers will not get water. In conclusion, Mr. Kejriwal emphasised that for

this struggle to succeed, the CFWD must prepare a comprehensive draft water policy for Delhi which must be circulated to people to have their input and then finally implement the policy. He is completely against water privatisation and would not support the entry of private companies in either the provision or management of water.

Speaker 2: Medha Patkar (National Alliance of People's Movements)

Ms. Patkar started by discussing how many activities are taking place in the country which are against the democratic vision of the country and constitutional rights of the people. She urged that we must all unite to find holistic solutions to reverse the impacts of "imposed development". In terms of water, she explained that in our part of the world, water is venerated and has a unique place in our lives because a large population is dependent on natural resources. "In our culture we preserve water for future generations. Water concerns are not only limited to climate change, it is reflected in our life with the idea of conservation".

Much of this tradition has been altered with the spread of industrialisation, capitalism and globalisation. Water, like other natural resources such as air and land is commodified, dependent on the market system, the basis of which is profit making not social welfare. She highlighted the various forms of discrimination that have existed in the past and even now when it comes to equitable water distribution. Due to castesim, water distribution is controlled by the Brahmins and not given to other castes. Discrimination also takes place on grounds of class, caste and gender. This control of water with a handful of people is wrong, water should be provided to each and everyone and our struggle should be focussed towards this only.

At the grassroots level, the constitution under list 11 clearly mentions the process of water distribution and management through micro and macro shed development plans but this does happen in accordance to the said constitutional provisions. Control over water, as a natural resource is increasingly getting centralised along with other natural resources such as oil and gas that are captured by few individuals making profits out of it and using it exclusively for themselves. Examples of big corporate houses such as the Ambanis and Jindals capturing natural resources are well known. Even the Rs. 560,000 crore scheme of joining major rivers is coming across as a medium through which river water and river could be purchased.

If we want to protect our rivers, then effective water management and conservation has to start from the source of the river up till the valleys not just by building dams on it to use the river for development purposes, the results of which are also inequitable. She explained that just as rainfall does not discriminate; water from rivers and other natural water bodies are a natural resource and should be made available to everyone. However, through construction of dams water is captured and after forming a centralised water body, the stalwarts of government made it available to big companies and under their aegis started selling water in a big way. "If water from dams is decentralised and given to the right people such as agriculturists and common masses for genuine development, the picture of development that will be created shall be truly beautiful and hopeful".

When it comes to underground water, data reveals that private companies are getting mineral water at 24 paisa a litre which is then treated and sold to us as mineral water for an exorbitant price. Moreover, people are made accustomed to drink only mineral and bottled water, so that private companies can continue to

make profit. Not just a habit, drinking mineral water is also a matter of status nowadays. As a result, even a wage labour would like to accept it as a symbol of status. This is a dreadful situation because at one level it is destroying the social fabric of our community by creating inequality among those who can and who cannot afford water and secondly privatisation of underground water is destroying the natural resources base which takes millions of years to replenish. "We must use underground water for the development of the area where the water is originating. This will lead to more sound development, and cases of drought can be reversed, instead of centralising the use of underground water and few corporates deciding, when, where and how much water shall be supplied to which area. If we want our communities to be self reliant, they must have access to water that is naturally available to them. In addition simple techniques have to be developed for water utilisation".

To fight this centralisation of water, we must have village development plans that aim to decentralise water so local water can be used locally. Though Planning Commission (PC) has made provision for villages to submit their plans but it never happens and then PC along with IFIs such as World Bank or Asian Development Bank through mediators (NGOs or companies) convince and squeeze the resources of the village people by making them believe that the development plans made for them are very good but in reality they are being looted in the name of development.

Water is being privatised in the name of development and efficiency giving way to many national and international companies to use natural resources recklessly. Examples of many small rivers and ponds drying up are rife in regions where water is privatised. Privatisation is also promoted by influencing the intelligentsia against the government on grounds of corruption and inefficiency. As a result, the government is also finding a comfort zone in giving up its responsibilities and outsourcing work to private companies and agencies after securing their profits.

"We need to fight this privatisation and strengthen our self dependence and not get habituated to outsourcing management of our natural resources" she believes. For this, we must organise our struggle sector wise because the IFI's have changed their policy from funding specific projects in specific states to a more sector wide approach. In doing so, they are wielding more power with less responsibility by influencing national policies and laws in their favour and taking credit of good management and setting up of infrastructure. But when there is a problem they claim to have made lesser investment than the government and hence the responsibility of any failure lies with the government, who must improve their governance standards. In the guise of welfare and development they are taking control over the natural resources and influencing policy in their favour. Another example of sector based approach is the setting up of the Delhi- Mumbai industrial corridor where 70 percent agricultural land will be taken over and converted to industrial area.

In the case of water, private companies are also revoking the British drought manual whereby in case of water shortage, water would be rationed for drinking, then for agriculture and finally industries. This is not being followed, especially in drought prone areas and most often water is first given for industrial development. In such as case, she questioned how will the needs of the poor be met? The common man is

the majority, but in this new system of privatisation, only the needs of the rich are addressed, while the poor is left to languish.

She concluded by affirming the need to organise ourselves and struggle in a bottom- up approach to fight practically and politically and the need to form a collective to oppose this commodification of our natural resources.

Speaker 3: Dr. AK Arun (Social Activist from Yuva Bharat and Founder Member of CFWD)

Dr. Arun explained the dynamics of privatisation and ways to keep the momentum of the struggle going. “We need to fight right till the end and that is the biggest challenge” he mentioned. According to him the changes that have occurred since liberalisation and the signing of GATT in 1991 are the key to guide our struggle. He elaborated that in 1991, there was a general consensus to privatise water supply and in 2010 the UN resolution considered water as a human right and a public property. “We often get caught up in the contrasting nature of debates regarding these issues, as a result of which, we are not able to sustain our struggle right till the end”.

The issue of water privatisation is larger than just Delhi. A close examination of areas abundant with natural resources are now dried up because in the name of serving the interests of the middle class, government and private companies have over exploited the natural resources leading to the drying of water reserves. He also tried to explain the profit making nature of private companies by citing the example of Tapookra village in Alwar district of Rajasthan, where on the request of people against the setting up of liquor factory in Alwar, CFWD were called and successfully managed to stop the same.

“After 15 years the same place now has a water plant. This is the difference we have to understand”. The investors decided to put up water plant instead of a liquor factory because they were assured of profits if they setup a water plant. This exhibits the basic premise of privatisation, which is to earn maximum profits. The product is not important for the private investors; it is the level of profit that is important for them. “If we want to fight we have to change the attitude and mindset of people towards water, we can’t change the company or blame the government. Privatisation has been entrenched in the minds of people intrinsically, so we have to change the mindset”. In water politics, everyone (government, private companies and few individuals) is hand in glove, so we need to re-politicise the issue of water.

We have no other choice than to fight. Privatisation is spread as a common idiom and is being enjoyed by people for the services offered. “Community and people’s ownership can only happen if there is a community left. Nowadays, the concept of community and society is not left anymore”. Everything is more individualised and community is understood in limited terms such as panchayats and small organisations. “So to have community ownership we need to preserve the community and society first, we also need to educate people and teach the importance and manners towards water. In addition, get involved in water politics and keep the struggle going on”.

SESSION - III

The last session was chaired by Mr. Afsar Jafri of Focus on the Global South and had eminent speakers such as Ashutosh Dixit, Member Urja Senate, and Mr. Sanjay Sharma from Water Workers Alliance and concluding remarks from Mr. Ram Prakash Sharma (President of Water Sewer and Sewage Disposal Employees Union)

Speaker 1: Sanjay Sharma (Water Workers Alliance)

Mr. Sharma; presented shocking data about Delhi's privatisation story making both the private company and government officials culpable of deceiving the common man and swindling the exchequer. He began by mentioning that all governments complain that water is less and makes people believe that there is less water. The truth is however different. The government to hide their incapability are deceiving people. In Delhi, the total amount of water that can be treated per day is 850 MGD. The DJB produces 850 MGD per day. In a gallon there are 4.54 litres of water and when multiplied by 850mgd, Delhi gets 3,84,53,80,000 litres every day. If we divide the litres by the population of Delhi (1.7 crores) it equals 227 litres per person per day. According to the Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation (CPHEEO) an individual needs 135-150 litres water per person. If 150 litres is multiplied by the population of Delhi, the requirement would be 2,55,00,00,000 litres. This shows an excess of 156 crore litres in Delhi per day, then how is there a water shortage? There can be reasons attributed to this. These are:

1. Delhi has leakages or water is wasted.
2. There is an artificial shortage created by government, or there is problem in the numbers given by DJB.
3. Or water in Delhi is distributed in inequitable manner.

If we take the first option, Delhi government says 50 percent leakage but documents and studies show otherwise. Every consultant has given different data varying from 30-60 percent on account NRW to show losses. So, if there is 50 percent (200 crore litre) leakage, then under water table should increase or Delhi should be flooded.

If we take the second option, then water shortage is created by governments and private companies. How is water shortage created? Example of Sonia Vihar would bring this point into perspective. The private company knew that Malviya Nagar (zone 2-3 of South Delhi) would be privatised. This company would take over the distribution and revenue network, so the plant deliberately showed shortage of water availability so that water provision could be handed to a private company for increased efficiency and revenue generation. Many important questions rise in this regard. The plant can treat 168 MGD when raw water is given 48 MGD it treats 138 MGD but even when 152 MGD raw water is given it still does not give 140 MGD; it gives treated water of 110 MGD. Where does the water go? Why does the Company fabricate production data?

We have photographs revealing that water is cleaned through chemicals. Test results show that these chemicals lead to Alzheimer's disease. At DJB's bottling plant Lab, residual alumina has been found higher than prescribed limits. To check the quality of water every district needs laboratories, which are not available. In Delhi there are only 5 laboratories, so there is no proper quality monitoring. Even in places

where they are available the labs work for only 8 hours a day and water is cleaned twenty four hours, so the reports cannot be taken as a general standard.

The last important point of discussion is that if entire Delhi is privatised, who would be affected most? To understand this, we conducted a study of Nangloi privatisation and Malviya Nagar privatisation to find out the costs. If entire Delhi water is privatised then average cost, for treatment of water, distribution and collection of revenue will be around 6.2 crores per MGD, At this time total cost of water treatment, distribution and collection of revenue by private operator may cost a total of Rs. 5000 crore. In addition sewage cost and miscellaneous costs will cost another Rs. 5000 crore making total of Rs. 10,000 crore if DJB is privatised. This amount will be recovered from the public in Delhi through their bills which would come out to be Rs. 6700 per person. He concluded by saying, this is the reality that will happen shortly if privatisation will be carried out. "Is Delhi ready for this? How will lower middle class and millions of people pay this amount? These questions have to be answered" and these questions and concerns should guide our struggle.

Speaker 2: Ashutosh Dixit (Member, Urja Senate)

Mr. Dixit highlighted the importance of creating public sentiment for water issues just as there is public sentiment for reservation or land acquisition. According to him this public sentiment is missing from our struggle. "People are yet not associating with this cause". Additionally, he emphasised the importance of forming organisations. He cited the example of corruption whereby 'corruption' has a network, people and machinery to be exercised. This is lacking in the case of anti-corruption, which has no systematic way to fight corruption. In order to do this, we all have to unite on this issue and an organisation with proper machinery and networks to spread our activities and advocacy more systematically".

Sporadic activities and advocacy campaigns will not yield the results, we are hoping for, it will happen only when there is an organisation to do the same. He spoke of the Urja Senate which has formed an organisation of RWAs across Delhi and have claimed victory on various issues concerning the welfare of people.

He reiterated that there is a need to de-construct some of the concepts and notions relating to water privatisation for our struggle to be fruitful. These are as below:

1. The concept of 24x7 or the slogan "dil mange more" is not a part of our traditional lexicon. It is a western concept which is imbibed in our minds. There is no requirement of 24x7 water supply in our society and in any case water is stored, if not in our homes, then with the tanker companies.
2. There is major emphasis on the term 'efficiency' in relation to privatisation. What does it mean? It means minimum resource with maximum delivery. In case of water privatisation however, if you buy more and pay more also, then it is not efficiency which is what the situation currently is as mentioned by several speakers today. Water and electricity are utilities (natural monopoly) not goods and services and if one company is in charge of supply and management, then how to measure efficiency?
3. In the case of electricity, it was mentioned that once electricity is privatised, the rates will reduce because stealing will reduce, leading to reduced per capita cost but what has happened? 40 percent reduction in electricity theft leading to Rs. 4000 crore profit to the private company. In

addition, electricity cost and tariff increased, plus the company gained a monopoly and finally got a bailout package. This is not efficiency.

4. Most often the government is apathetic towards the general public and this is the reason why such high level of corruption is taking place.
5. Conservation effort is an important factor also. Conserving water is part of our culture and our sources of water generation are different be it rain type, glaciers etc are all geographically very different from the West. If water is privatised, then we cannot conserve it because it is not under our control. The reason for our adoption of foreign models is because there is less participation and ownership of people and government resulting in the handing over of charge to the private sector.
6. Regulatory function of private companies is always emphasised but the principles of regulation should be evolved according to our conditions and not according to foreign techniques. Most often the regulators are the bureaucrats, civil servants and State officials, so regulation commission on electricity and not a single audit of an electricity company is done till date. The companies decide the rates and the government accepts it without any audit.

In conclusion he emphasised the role of an organisation to keep the struggle going on in a practical and intelligent way.

Discussion

1. Tarun Mandloi from Khandwa raised a question about raising awareness of the public. To this, Mr. Dixit replied that privatisation may not be stopped, but must make people aware of some of the issues highlighted above. Another important aspect is to strengthen the organisations to fight privatisation.
2. No standardisation of water because no labs in all districts, so people are not aware if they are treated water. How to ensure that quality monitoring is achieved? There was a discussion on this topic and most people agreed that Delhi must have more laboratories and should be open to quality control measures.
3. Finally, in order to organise people and movements, there was a request for CFWD to organise more workshops of this nature and also partner with RWA's to spread the message and information regarding privatisation.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Ram Prakash Sharma gave the vote of thanks to, countrywide activists, DJB union and people from Delhi and abroad for their support. He mentioned that part of DJB is prepared to accept any challenge of the government. He talked of the Nangloi water privatisation case. In 2003 this plant was treating water 17-20 MGD; which had to be finally reversed and given back to the DJB in 2005-06 and now DJB provides 41 MGD water every day against its installed capacity i.e. 40 MGD. Now once again in 2013 Nagloi WTP (Water Treatment Plant) being handed over to a France base private company. Sewage treatment plants (STP) are better than any private company's treatment plant and DJB can be trusted to supply good quality of water. The only hindrance is the excessive corruption and collusion between politicians, private companies and influential personalities. He mentioned that 90 percent of all tankers belong to politicians. He concluded the session and the meeting by offering to stand up and support every individual or group who are ready to struggle against privatisation of water and promised to fight right till the end to not let DJB be privatised.

MEDIA COVERAGE

'Water privatisation is not for India': Smriti Kak Ramachandran

The Hindu, New Delhi, Published: March 20, 2013 00:00 IST | Updated: March 20, 2013 05:01 IST

Apex court specifies that air, water, sea and forests cannot be with private sector. A social republic like India cannot have water in private ownership and deny the citizens their right to quality water at affordable prices, said Justice Rajinder Sachar here on Tuesday, criticising the Delhi Government's move to undertake three public-private partnership projects in the city. Speaking at a conference on "Water Privatisation: Learning from India and International Experiences", Justice Sachar said: "There is nothing above the Constitution. The Preamble says India is a secular, socialist, Republic...and handing over ownership of water to private companies is cheating the Constitution." He said the Government is obliged to adhere to the Supreme Court guidelines that have specified several times that air, water, sea and forests cannot be under private ownership. He disapproved of the Delhi Government's move to rope in private companies for doing work that is the State's responsibility. Rebutting the Government claims that PPP will usher in changes in the water sector, Jammu Anand, an employee of the Nagpur Municipal Corporation Employees Union, cited the example of Nagpur where privatisation and the promise of 24x7 water supply has not shown any positive results. "Before the privatisation exercise the Government claimed there were 50 per cent non-revenue water and 45 per cent leakages. They said the Government is in a financial crisis, not capable of arresting these faults and the municipality does not have the political will to do so. Today the leakages are still 30 per cent and no one knows why," he said. Mr. Anand said the Government shrewdly chose a place for the pilot project in Nagpur that did not have a major water problem. Also speaking at the conference organised by the Citizens' Front for Water Democracy, Focus on the Global South, PEACE, Delhi Journalists' Association, WS&SDEU and Water Workers' Alliance, Himanshu Thakkar of the South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers & People said the move to have a Water Resources Regulatory Authority that will among other things serve to decide the tariffs needs to be opposed as well. PPPs are being encouraged, he said, adding the only state in India which has a water regulatory authority is Maharashtra, where it has been a failure. "Post-Independence the biggest water scam is in Maharashtra where Rs.75,000crore has been shown spent on irrigation in the past 10 years but in reality not one hectare has been irrigated," he said. S.A. Naqvi of the Citizens' Front for Water Democracy said despite evidence of privatisation not being a success globally, India is keen on moving ahead with privatisation in almost all sectors from energy to water. "Privatisation is a failed model, yet India is pushing forwards towards it. The Government, it seems, is distancing itself from its responsibility."

Link: <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-newdelhi/water-privatisation-is-not-for-india/article4528156.ece>

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Bolivian activist shares his water privatisation war

Wednesday, March 20, 2013 Nivedita Khandekar, Hindustan Times

New Delhi, March 19, 2013 First Published: 23:49 IST (19/3/2013)

The year 2000 changed the fate of Bolivia, a South American country. The slogan "Water is life ... You cannot privatise life" reverberated the city during the blockage. Students, housewives, teachers and workers hit the streets of Cochabamba and La Paz cities. They were protesting the privatisation of water services after activists explained how the private company had hiked the tariff by 300% and earned a profit of USD 300 million per year. In April 2000, the water contract was finally terminated. "After water, we stopped the privatisation of natural resources. We then changed the constitution — 'Water can never be privatised and it should be managed by the state with the help of communities'," recounted Pablo Solon, from Bolivia, on Tuesday. In 2010, it was Solon as a Bolivian Ambassador to the UN, who moved the resolution identifying water as a basic human right and that it cannot be privatised. India is a signatory to it. Bolivia changed the constitution. "(But), the preamble of the Indian Constitution says we are a 'sovereign socialist republic. If we are a socialist country, how can you privatise water? It means treason with the constitution," pointed out Justice Rajinder Sachchar. Solon and Sachchar were speaking at an anti-water-privatisation conference where activists from cities across India that have witnessed 24X7 water supply under the public private partnership (PPP) shared their experiences. The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has embarked on three 24X7 pilot projects under the PPP model. Jammu Anand (Nagpur), Rasool Nadaf (Hubli Dharwad), Gaurav Dwivedi and Rehmat (Khandwa), Vinay Baindur (Bengaluru), Baburao Dandinkar (Gulbarga) and Ashok Govindpurkar (Latur) shared experiences from their municipalities' water privatisation projects. Govindpurkar has led a successful fight for re-municipalisation of water services at Latur, the hometown of former Maharashtra chief minister Vilasrao Deshmukh.

Link:<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/1029057.aspx>

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Water privatisation plan slammed

19 March 2013 Statesman news services

NEW DELHI, 19 MARCH:

The Delhi government's ambitious plan to privatise water distribution has brought wrath from social rights activists at a function in the Capital today. "Since the past one year, the state government has decided to go ahead with the plans of privatisation as Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. The pilot projects were designated in areas like Malviya Nagar, Soniya Vihar and Nangloi at higher cost than estimated to extend financial benefits to private parties," alleged Mr SA Naqvi, Coordinator of Citizen's Front for Water Democracy. According to an activist, in September 2012, the government of Delhi approved the privatisation of its management in some areas, sanctioned by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), in South Delhi as pilot project amid protests of RWAs. The Malviya Nagar area was handed over to a consortium of Infra while the Tahal Consulting Engineers and the Israel's Hagihon Jerusalem Water and Waste Water Works were awarded the Mehrauli and Vasant Vihar areas respectively. In the entire process, the RWAs were not

consulted even though the Delhi government claimed that it did so. In October 2012, the DJB gave formal approval for revamping water supply in areas under the Nangloi water treatment plant in west Delhi under the PPP model. A social activist and member of National Alliance of Peoples Movement has also shared her grievance on privatisation of water in Delhi. She said: "Privatisation is 'real threat' and not just imagined as the government wants its citizens to believe that water is a commodity to purchase by selling its natural sources to private companies and the example is bottled water. PPP in a way has been introduced in an acceptable form to the citizens and it is high time for a strong citizen's movement against privatisation of water."

Link:http://www.thestatesman.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&show=archive&id=448429&catid=95&year=2013&month=03&day=20&Itemid=66

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Activists launch group to create public awareness on water rights

Nivedita Khandekar, Hindustan Times New Delhi, March 22, 2013 First Published: 00:24 IST(22/3/2013) | Last Updated: 00:26 IST(22/3/2013)

In the wake of the fact that 35 cities across India have partially or fully launched water privatisation projects, activists and water workers have formed a group - National Coalition Against Water Privatisation - to launch a public awareness programme on water rights. Delhi has already embarked on three pilot water privatisation projects. Convinced that corruption was the main driving force behind the government's move to privatise water in the garb of public private partnership (PPP) models, activists from as many as 37 cities, NGO representatives and water workers' unions held a meeting to discuss the role of civil society and activists in preventing privatisation of water. "Full or partial, the water sector in more than 35 cities has been privatised and efforts are on to go ahead with similar schemes in another 80 cities. We plan to launch a protest campaign throughout India as activists and NGOs from across the country are keen to fight it out," said Afsar Jafri of Focus on Global South. SA Naqvi of Citizens Front for Water Democracy alleged that people are paying for 'corruption vis-à-vis privatisation' in terms of enhanced tariff without getting any service." "Despite people's opposition, governments across the country are forcing privatisation agenda on the public. There are various groups in different cities raising voice against water privatisation and it is time now to unite," Sanjay Sharma of Water Workers' Alliance said.

Link: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/Activists-launch-group-to-create-public-awareness-on-water-rights/Article1-1030197.aspx>

INVITE

The Citizen's Front for Water Democracy and Focus on the Global South in partnership with PEACE, Delhi Journalist Association and Water Workers Alliance invites you for a one day conference on "Water Privatization: Learning from India and International Experiences" on 19 March (Tuesday) 2013, at Indian Social Institute, 10, Institutional Area, Lodhi Road (Behind Sai Baba Temple) in New Delhi, starting at 9.30 am till 5.30pm.

Today, water has become a scarce resource and it has been predicted that water scarce countries will be facing hydrological poverty if actions are not taken urgently. In order to avert this disaster, the national governments in partnership with the World Bank and the transnational water corporation have designed a new mechanism, the Public Private Partnership (PPP), which would make water rather a more scarce commodity and will be available to those who can afford it. The model would be based on the full-cost pricing of water, and it will be quite a painful adjustment for humanity. But for new custodians of water, this is a small price to pay for water security, for their guardianship of our most precious resource.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) is gaining to be a favored form of introducing the private sector in water supply. The PPP model of privatization of basic resources has fuelled a new debate on water privatization not only in India but globally. India is also promoting PPPs in water despite being a signatory to the UN Resolution of 2010 which recognizes 'right to water as a human right'. In India, the PPPs in water sector have been promoted by the Central Government and various state governments have also implemented them in urban centres like Hubli-Dharwad (Karnataka) and Nagpur (Maharashtra).

In Delhi, the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) is implementing three pilot projects on the PPP basis and has introduced a number of reforms including outsourcing of meter reading and billing, privatisation of tanker water supply and the appointment of three special magistrates to deal with cases of 'unauthorised' use of water in the past one year making water privatization a 'real threat'.

Given the current wave of privatization projects through PPPs in India, Citizen's Front for Water Democracy and Focus on the Global South in partnership with PEACE and Delhi Journalist Association and Water Workers Alliance is organizing a day Conference to discuss about the PPP model in water sector in India and to learn from state and regional experiences and plan strategies to protect water as a common good which cannot be privatised or commodified. Given your expertise in this field, we would like to invite you to join this meeting and share your thoughts and experiences.

We would request you to please confirm your participation at the earliest and email the filled in Registration Form to Mansi Sharma (+91-98188-09018) at mansi@focusweb.org.

Looking forward to your confirmation at the earliest.

Kind regards,

SA Naqvi and Afsar Jafri

On behalf of the Organisers

Concept Note

The debate on water privatization is fraught with many issues not only in India but globally also. Proponents of privatization argue that water should be viewed as an economic good and hence commoditised. Since only recently in 2010, the UN recognised the right to water as a human right to which India was a signatory, privatization had already made huge inroads in the water sector. Privatisation supporters most often bring in the argument of inefficient service provision which has led governments to promote privatization partly or wholly. This has been the case in India too wherein the argument of increasing the 'efficiency' and 'financial sustainability' of the water supply utility by reduction of Non Revenue Water (NRW) has been brought in by the government who find solutions in involving the private sector in various ways.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) is gaining to be yet another favored form of introducing the private sector in water supply. They have been promoted by the central government and various state governments have implemented them in urban centres like Delhi, Hubli-Dharwad (Karnataka), Nagpur (Maharashtra) and other cities. The recently revised National Water Policy 2012 also foresees the minimisation of the government's role in water services and promotes the involvement of private parties through the PPP model, encouraging the commercialization of water services. Even though in India, water is a State subject i.e. it falls under the purview of the State government, policies at the national level impinge and impact policies at the federal level. The overall policy environment of liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG) only increases the momentum of privatization.

Despite being strongly promoted in the policy arena and implemented in several countries in the South in the 1990s, privatization has achieved neither the scale nor benefits anticipated. Rather privatization has not been successful and failed to reach the poor and marginalized in countries such as Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bolivia. The irony of the prevailing situation in the country is that where on one hand, countries like France, Uruguay, South Africa are handing over their privatised water utilities back to the government or remunicipalising, India is pushing for privatization. Water privatization is not only about the business of buying and selling a natural resource but also about the state slowly withdrawing from the social sector or in other words cutting down the states involvement in the provision of essential/basic services such as food, water, health and housing. Water is the basis of life and part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. However, in a neoliberal environment, it is seen as an 'economic good' rather than a 'social good'.

Movements and campaigns against water privatization have played not only an effective role but also have succeeded in stopping and stalling the process of privatization as exemplified by the water wars in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Even in India, campaigns against water privatization have managed to stall the process of privatization in Delhi in 2005 and similarly in Mumbai in 2007. It is crucial to understand from international countries how they have succeeded in fighting the forces of privatization such as in South Africa, Bolivia, Malaysia, Uruguay and search for alternatives. Important lessons from States in India that

are undergoing water privatization and ways in which they are dealing with it would greatly add to the collective struggle against privatization.

Given the current wave of privatization projects in the water sector (the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), the agency responsible for water supply in Delhi, is implementing three pilot projects on a PPP basis and has introduced a number of reforms including outsourcing of meter reading and billing, privatisation of tanker water supply and the appointment of three special magistrates to deal with cases of 'unauthorised' use of water in the past one year making water privatization a 'real threat') and under the current backdrop, a one day conference is being organised on **19th March (Tuesday)** in **New Delhi** on "**Water Privatization: Learning from India and International Experiences**" by the **Citizen's Front for Water Democracy, Focus on the Global South, PEACE, Delhi Journalist Association and Water Workers Alliance** at the **Indian Social Institute, Lodhi Estate** (Behind Sai Baba Mandir).

For any further information, please contact:

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List of Participants

Sr. No.	Name	Place
1.	Vijay Kranti	New Delhi
2.	Vijender Kumar	New Delhi
3.	Pramod Kumar	New Delhi
4.	Bhagat Singh	New Delhi
5.	Bhairav Singh	Bhagpat, Uttar Pradesh
6.	Rajendra Singh	Bhagpat, Uttar Pradesh
7.	N. Arun Kumar	Chitradurga, Karnataka
8.	Rasool M. Nadaf	Hubli, Karnataka
9.	Ashok Kumar Chaudhary	New Delhi
10.	Brij Pal	New Delhi
11.	Parmod Kumar	New Delhi
12.	A. S. Yadav	New Delhi
13.	Mani Pal Singh	New Delhi
14.	Om Pal	New Delhi
15.	Mohammad Naseeb	New Delhi
16.	Alauddin	New Delhi
17.	Anindita Chakraborty	New Delhi
18.	Shaukeen	New Delhi
19.	Intejaar	New Delhi
20.	Samra Khan	Meerut, Uttar Pradesh
21.	Rehane Khan	Meerut, Uttar Pradesh
22.	Kiran Shaheen	New Delhi
23.	Vijay Singh Choudhary	Rajasthan
24.	K. P. Singh	Uttar Pradesh
25.	Kuldeep	New Delhi
26.	Desh Raj	New Delhi
27.	D S Kapur	New Delhi
28.	Rajesh R.	New Delhi
29.	M. D. Narang	New Delhi
30.	Rajendendu Parashad	New Delhi
31.	Praveen Kumar	Gurgaon, Haryana
32.	Raj Kumar	Gurgaon, Haryana
33.	Vinod Kumar	New Delhi
34.	Manoranjan Pegu	Faridabad, Haryana
35.	Hiray Uday Kaul	...
36.	Shashi Shekhar Mishr	New Delhi
37.	Rajiv Singh	New Delhi

38.	Bhoj Raj Pradhan	New Delhi
39.	Yogesh	New Delhi
40.	Aartha Kukreti	New Delhi
41.	Anoop Kumar Sharma	New Delhi
42.	A K Jain	New Delhi
43.	Himanshu Thakkar	New Delhi
44.	Gaurav Dwivedi	Badwani, M.P.
45.	Avi Ram	New Delhi
46.	Ram Janak	New Delhi
47.	Rameshwar	New Delhi
48.	Mahesh Sharma	New Delhi
49.	Chandra Prakash Ojha	New Delhi
50.	V. Anaimuthu	New Delhi
51.	P.D. Tharappan	New Delhi
52.	S. Shrinivasan	New Delhi
53.	Anil Handa	New Delhi
54.	R.P.S Chaudhury	New Delhi
55.	Ashok Pandit	New Delhi
56.	Tarun Mandoli	Khandwa, M.P.
57.	Pooja Ravi	New Delhi
58.	P.P. Lakra	New Delhi
59.	Arpit Jain	New Delhi
60.	Vinay Bharadwaj	New Delhi
61.	Rajiv Sajwan	New Delhi
62.	K. P. Sharma	New Delhi
63.	Ashok Singh Yadav	New Delhi
64.	Anil Kumar	New Delhi
65.	Sunil Kumar	New Delhi
66.	S.S. Dangi	New Delhi
67.	Kiran Pal	New Delhi
68.	Sanwal Ram Yadav	New Delhi
69.	Arun Kumar	New Delhi
70.	Jayil	New Delhi
71.	P.N. Patel	Jaipur, Rajasthan
72.	Savai Singh	Jaipur, Rajasthan
73.	Garima Verma	New Delhi
74.	Shilpa Ohri	New Delhi
75.	Ankita Handoo	New Delhi
76.	Sumarindu	New Delhi

77.	Sanjay Kumar	New Delhi
78.	Virapal	New Delhi
79.	Rakesh Kumar	New Delhi
80.	M.J. Gulfam	New Delhi
81.	Imran Khan	New Delhi
82.	Daya Chand	Uttar Pradesh
83.	Raj Kishore	New Delhi
84.	Naresh Chand	New Delhi
85.	Badan Pal	New Delhi
86.	Babu Ram	New Delhi
87.	Jai Kishna	New Delhi
88.	M. Ahmed	New Delhi
89.	Ch. Islammudin	New Delhi
90.	Ch. Riyazuddin	New Delhi
91.	R.L. Rahatgaoukar	Aurangabad
92.	Deepak Sharma	Uttar Pradesh
93.	Dr. Vandana Shiva	New Delhi
94.	Gagan Lal	New Delhi
95.	Natrapal	New Delhi
96.	Surender Singh	New Delhi
97.	Ashok Govindpurkar	Latur, Maharashtra
98.	Pursotam Patil	Latur, Maharashtra
99.	Sankar Lal	New Delhi
100.	Om Pal	New Delhi
101.	Rakesh Kumar	New Delhi
102.	Mukesh Kumar	New Delhi
103.	Dina Nath	New Delhi
104.	Rakesh Raj	New Delhi
105.	S.B. Singh	New Delhi
106.	Neeraj Karan Singh	New Delhi
107.	K.K. Raj	New Delhi
108.	Milind Sagar	New Delhi
109.	Tilak Ram	Uttar Pradesh
110.	Ali Sher	New Delhi
111.	K.J. Joy	Pune, Maharashtra
112.	Pramod Kumar	New Delhi
113.	Arun Bidani	New Delhi
114.	Raman Tayagi	Meerut, Uttar Pradesh
115.	Vijay Laxmi	New Delhi

116.	Heera Lal	New Delhi
117.	Ashutosh Joshi	Jaipur, Rajasthan
118.	Madhuresh Kumar	New Delhi
119.	Nagraj Adve	New Delhi
120.	Radhey Shyam	New Delhi
121.	Mukesh Kumar	New Delhi
122.	Suresh Kumar	Gurgaon, Haryana
123.	Krishan Singh	New Delhi
124.	Rajendra Singh Negi	New Delhi
125.	Rajesh Kumar	New Delhi
126.	Hari Om	New Delhi
127.	Nanak Chand	New Delhi
128.	B.S. Gubastin	New Delhi
129.	M.K. Sharma	New Delhi
130.	Nivedita Khandekar	New Delhi
131.	Jagbeer Singh	New Delhi
132.	Rasan Lal	New Delhi
133.	Gajender Singh	New Delhi
134.	Prem Shankar Verma	Uttar Pradesh
135.	Satraghan	New Delhi
136.	Rajender Kumar	New Delhi
137.	Ram Naresh	Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh
138.	Ram Gopal	New Delhi
139.	Ashok Kumar	New Delhi
140.	Jai Bhagwan	New Delhi
141.	Jammu Anand	Nagpur, Maharashtra
142.	Manohar Lal	New Delhi
143.	Mahesh Kumar	New Delhi
144.	Sachin Kumar	New Delhi
145.	AC Sartasananda	New Delhi
146.	Devki Nandan	New Delhi
147.	Dipak Dholakia	New Delhi
148.	Baburao S Dandikar	Dharwad, Karnataka
149.	Mayank Singh	New Delhi
150.	Ashok Roy	New Delhi
151.	Gursharan Singh	New Delhi
152.	Har Prasad	New Delhi
153.	Ravi Kant Rai	New Delhi
154.	Ashwin Rai	New Delhi

155.	Maharaj Singh	New Delhi
156.	B. Yadav	New Delhi
157.	J.P. Narayan	New Delhi
158.	Satbir Singh	New Delhi
159.	Birpal Singh	New Delhi
160.	Ajay Kumar	New Delhi
161.	Umed Rati	Modi Nagar
162.	T.S. Bajjar	New Delhi
163.	A.R. Abbas	New Delhi
164.	Udai Veer Singh	New Delhi
165.	Rakesh K Rai	New Delhi
166.	K.K. Rai	New Delhi
167.	Sachin Hitkari	New Delhi
168.	Tejpal	New Delhi
169.	Snehal M. Shah	New Delhi
170.	Harish Sharma	Rajasthan
171.	Bhushan Gupta	New Delhi
172.	Balraj Singh	New Delhi
173.	Vicky Walters	New Zealand
174.	Arvind Pandey	New Delhi
175.	Ramesh Kumar	New Delhi
176.	Vivek Singh	New Delhi
177.	Sahabram	New Delhi
178.	Raman Kannan	Haryana
179.	Tripurari Prakash	New Delhi
180.	Vinay Kumar Goyal	New Delhi
181.	Varun Kaushik	New Delhi
182.	Sanjay Singh	New Delhi
183.	Devender	New Delhi
184.	S.A. Azad	New Delhi
185.	Vinay Baidur	Bangalore, Karnataka
186.	Viren Lobo	New Delhi
187.	Jaspal Kasanu	New Delhi
188.	Narendra Bhadana	New Delhi
189.	Brham Chudhaury	New Delhi
190.	C. Singh	New Delhi
191.	Ramesh Rana	New Delhi
192.	Ravi Massey	New Delhi
193.	Sasi Kant	New Delhi

194.	Babu Ram Naagar	New Delhi
195.	Ravinder Kumar Sharma	New Delhi
196.	Rakesh Bhardwaj	New Delhi
197.	Radhey Shyam Goswami	New Delhi
198.	Rajbir Singh	Haryana
199.	C. B. Singh	New Delhi
200.	Soheb	New Delhi
201.	Dharpal	New Delhi
202.	Rehmat Rawat	Badwani, M.P.
203.	B.R. Sharma	New Delhi
204.	Sultan Singh	New Delhi
205.	Ram Phoal	New Delhi
206.	Saurav	New Delhi
207.	Joginder Singh	New Delhi
208.	Bhure Ram	New Delhi
209.	Kuldip Kumar	New Delhi
210.	Ram Niwas	New Delhi
211.	BalKishan	New Delhi
212.	A.K. Garg	New Delhi
213.	S.S. Meena	New Delhi
214.	Richa Sharma	Noida, Uttar Pradesh
215.	Kuldeep	Noida, Uttar Pradesh
216.	Habib	New Delhi
217.	Jalaauddin	New Delhi
218.	Bhagvanji Raiyani	Mumbai, Maharashtra
219.	Ravindra Singh	New Delhi
220.	Polhit	Noida, Uttar Pradesh
221.	Nirmala Sharma	New Delhi
222.	Dalbir Singh	New Delhi
223.	Rampar Koshi	New Delhi
224.	Ravinder Singh	New Delhi
225.	Pawan	New Delhi
226.	Rajbir Singh	New Delhi
227.	Shri Bhagwan	New Delhi
228.	Shou Shaha	New Delhi
229.	Jagdish Kumar	New Delhi
230.	Gireesh Bhaskar R	Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh
231.	Sunil Kumar	Ahmednagar, Maharashtra
232.	Dwarka Prasad Pathak	Madhya Pradesh

233.	D.P. Senwal	New Delhi
234.	Duli Chand	Faridabad, Haryana
235.	Rajendra Ravi	New Delhi
236.	Kumar	New Delhi
237.	Gregory Berglund	New Delhi
238.	Gopal Krishna	New Delhi
239.	Sheel Kumar Jain	Faridabad
240.	Twisha Hans	New Delhi
241.	Prakhar Jain	New Delhi
242.	Jai Bhagwan Sharma	New Delhi
243.	Sukruta Allmi	New Delhi
244.	Mahaswetha Dass	New Delhi
245.	Shankar Anand	New Delhi
246.	Priti	New Delhi
247.	Sanjeev	New Delhi
248.	Soumya Dutta	New Delhi
249.	Dr. A.K. Arun	New Delhi
250.	Ashok Sonawane	Mumbai, Maharashtra
251.	Ompal Singh	New Delhi
252.	Roshan Lal Rathor	New Delhi
253.	Vichitra Singh	New Delhi
254.	Radhey Shyam	New Delhi
255.	Baljeet	New Delhi
256.	Ran Singh	New Delhi
257.	Kuldeep Kumar	New Delhi
258.	Keshav Veer	New Delhi
259.	Jagbeer	New Delhi
260.	Ram Nagina	New Delhi
261.	Om Prakash	New Delhi
262.	Ram Kishan Gohlot	New Delhi
263.	Rohtash	New Delhi
264.	Ram Prakash Sharma	New Delhi
265.	Vir Babu	New Delhi
266.	Dinesh Goel	New Delhi
267.	Rahul Arora	Gurgaon, Haryana
268.	Ramneet Kaur	New Delhi
269.	Saurabh Sinha	Ballia, Uttar Pradesh
270.	N. R. Bheda	Chennai, Tamil Nadu
271.	Chandan	New Delhi

272.	A.K. Gautam	New Delhi
273.	Mamta	New Delhi
274.	Renu	New Delhi
275.	Poonan	New Delhi
276.	Manshi Prakash	New Delhi
277.	Anita Kapoor	New Delhi
278.	Diwan Singh	New Delhi
279.	P.C. Mishra	New Delhi
280.	Amit Srivastava	Noida, Uttar Pradesh
281.	Raza Abbas	New Delhi
282.	Ajoy Ashirwad	New Delhi
283.	Rachna Atri	New Delhi
284.	Shweta	New Delhi
285.	Lakshita	New Delhi
286.	Mahesh	New Delhi
287.	Vijay Pratap	New Delhi
288.	Ruchi shree	New Delhi
289.	Tan Zhi Xian	New Delhi
290.	Tokas Satan Je	Madhya Pradesh
291.	MP S Raghuwanshi	Faridabad, Haryana
292.	Nikam Vishvash	Maharashtra
293.	Satyam Shrivastava	New Delhi
294.	Ovais Sultan Khan	New Delhi
295.	Shyam Singh Bisht	Uttarakhand
296.	Afsar Jafri	New Delhi
297.	Pro. Soni	New Delhi
298.	Arvind Kejriwal	Kaushambi
299.	Chirag Garg	New Delhi
300.	Parul Dwivedi	Gaziabad
301.	Sahab Ram	Bahadurgarh
302.	SA Naqvi	New Delhi
303.	Sanjay Sharma	New Delhi
304.	Medha Patkar	Mumbai
305.	Pablo Salon	Bangkok
306.	Rajendra Sacchar	New Delhi
307.	Ashutosh Dixit	New Delhi
308.	Trisha Agarwala	New Delhi
309.	Mansi Sharma	New Delhi
