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## KMC not to levy water tax



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KOLKATA: The Kolkata Municipal Corporation will not levy tax on drinking water for the citizens. Chief minister Mamata Banerjee made it clear at a function on Tuesday evening at Dhapa, located off Eastern Metropolitan Bypass where the CM inaugurated a water treatment plant with a capacity to supply 30 million gallons of filtered water. While expressing

happiness that the new water treatment plant would meet the demands of lakhs of residents living along EM Bypass, Banerjee raised the tax issue and made it amply clear that the Trinamool Congress was dead against imposition of tax on drinking water.

"When we came to power in 2000 in the KMC, I advised the then mayor Subrata Mukherjee to arrange for sufficient water for the citizens across Kolkata. But I had also advised not to levy tax on water as it is an essential service which should come free of cost. I am glad that the KMC has constructed a water treatment plant to cater the entire EM Bypass population. Even today I have advised not to levy tax on this essential service," Banerjee said after inaugurating the water treatment plant. Banerjee advised mayor Sovan Chatterjee who was present at the function to ensure safety and security of the entire water treatment plant complex.

"I think the civic body needs a police outpost to man the new water plant as it is a sensitive installation," Banerjee said. In reply, the mayor said that the KMC had already donated 1.5 bigha land to Kolkata police to set up a police station for the safety of the water treatment plant. Former mayor Subrata Mukherjee also present at the function recalled how the Trinamool Congress run KMC board had initiated augmentation of water supply in Kolkata by modernizing Palta waterworks. CM speaking at the function asked the mayor to ensure that people get filtered water at the earliest. According to the KMC water supply department officials, the residents of EM Bypass from Beliaghata to Patuli (Garia) would get filtered water from

the newly constructed plant by next three weeks.