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City has over 1 lakh illegal connections

Hyderabad: There are over 1 lakh illegal water connections in Greater Hyderabad. A survey being conducted by the Administrative Staff College of India has revealed thousands of illegal connections in just the three surrounding municipalities of Malkajgiri, LB Nagar and Kukatpally.

The ASCI survey is also covering the number of families staying in a building, usage of water, sources of water, how much are they willing to pay, the quality of water etc.

“The Board wants to give one last opportunity to people to voluntarily disclose their illegal connections and get them regularised,” said a source.

Earlier too, the Board had offered to regularise illegal connections but only 7,000 applications had been received. People had then complained that the penalty and other charges for regularisation were very high.

Keeping this in view, the officials are now being liberal while preparing a revised policy.

“This scheme will be available to those who voluntarily disclose their illegal connections. If the Board identifies the connections, then the penalty and other charges will be three times more than the earlier scheme,” said an official.

The HMWS&SB had earlier offered to regularize illegal water connections on payment of three years' water consumption charges, two times connection charges and Rs 300 as service charges. The offer was not attractive, citizens had said.

Keeping this in view, the officials are now being liberal while preparing a revised policy and will charge only one year's consumption charges and one-time connection charges.

“This scheme will be available to those who voluntarily disclose their illegal connections. If the Board identifies the connections, then the penalty and other charges will be three times more than the earlier scheme, besides, criminal cases will be booked against the illegal water connection holder,” said an

official.

HMWS&SB managing director J. Syamala Rao said a new, liberal policy for regularization of illegal connections would be announced shortly.

“I appeal to the citizens to utilize this opportunity or face criminal cases including going to jail. We are going to be very stringent with water pilferers and also with our field staff for failing to identify illegal connections before our senior officials do it,” he said.