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BWSSB Profits Seeped Through Old BU Meter

A faulty mechanical water meter at the Jnana Bharati campus of Bangalore University (BU) caused a monthly revenue loss of at least Rs 36,000 to BWSSB for over 10 years.

Though BU consumes approximately 2 million litres of water every month, the old meter reportedly recorded less than half the used amount. The BWSSB charges `36 for every kilolitre of water after consumption crosses a certain slab. Ironically, as BWSSB does not have any scientific means to substantiate its findings of loss of revenue at BU, it cannot charge the University for the 'unrecorded' usage.

BWSSB engineer in-chief T Venkatraju said, "The defect in the meter came to light only after we replaced it with an advanced digital meter as part of our automated meter-reading project." He said mechanical meters are inefficient and become defective, and it is difficult to ascertain if they are defective and malfunctioning. "We are planning to replace the existing mechanical meters at the premises of bulk consumers with digital meters to ensure that readings are accurate," he said. According to BWSSB sources, the Board is likely to ask

commercial and bulk users to bear the cost of replacing the existing meters with digital ones.

The BWSSB is implementing a pilot project to make the meter-reading process automatic by installing digital meters programmed to transmit usage data to a centralised server. The data from the meter will be updated on the BWSSB website and can be accessed by consumers.

The project is expected to help BWSSB minimise losses from use of unaccounted-for water, which currently stands at over 40 per cent. Moreover, it will help regulate the flow of water to ensure equitable distribution.