

**The Hindu** 18.11.2013

## Using water to the last drop

**Dennis Marcus Mathew**

Plans to use treated water optimally

The sewage treatment plant (STP) at Muttathara, which is to be inaugurated shortly, might set a new precedent in the State with regard to utilisation of waste water.

Authorities here are mulling various applications of treated waste water from the plant, said to be the first full-fledged one in the State, instead of letting it flow into the Parvathy Puthanar canal.

The Rs.80-crore STP, which has a capacity of 107 million litres per day (MLD), will begin with 40 MLD collected from the city.

## For 25 years

Once the city's sewage network is expanded, it is expected to function at full capacity. The plant, which has been operating on a trial basis for the past three months, is designed to meet the city's sewage disposal requirements for at least 25 years.

## Treated, but wasted

Officials say about 30 MLD waste water is coming out in treated form from the plant every day, all of which is being let out into the Parvathy Puthanar canal.

U.V. Jose, project director in-charge, Project Management Unit, Kerala Sustainable Urban Development Project (KSUDP), says plans are afoot to hold discussions with agencies including the Airports Authority of India, since the international airport is situated close to the STP, on the possibilities of the treated water from the STP being used for purposes like gardening and watering of landscapes, washing of tarmacs/roads or other general purposes other than drinking for which normal water was currently being used.

Mr. Jose says the results of the trial are “consistent, conducive and encouraging” for plans to utilise the treated water.

Full-fledged efforts to utilise the water on a commercial basis will be considered only later, once the plant was fully functional.

### **‘Give it free’**

Ashok Kumar Singh, Managing Director, Kerala Water Authority, is all for utilisation of treated water, stating that it could even be given free to those who are interested in using it.

Making it a commercial product is a policy matter and is something that is already being done in several Indian cities.

### **As manure**

Whether that is followed here or not, there is no doubt that the treated water should not be let off into canals. Instead, it must be used for purposes such as construction, gardening etc., Mr. Singh says.

Mr. Jose says the possibilities of making use of the sludge from the STP, as manure or in any other possible manner, are also being checked out.