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Resistance to revised drinking water tariff

Special Correspondent

COIMBATORE: Parties in the Coimbatore Corporation have rejected the revised tariff for drinking water supplied by local bodies by pointing out that it will inflict further agony on the public who are already reeling under water shortage in the city.

According to the parties, the State Government has not only increased the tariff but also drastically reduced the quantity of water for each slab.

For instance, Rs.3.50 had been fixed earlier for every 1,000 litres of water up to a slab of 50,000 litres for the domestic connections.

The proposed revision puts it at Rs. 4.50, but the 50,000 litres slab has been brought down to 7,500 litres.

The same quantity of water has been offered to commercial establishments, but for a higher tariff of Rs. 5.25.

For consumption of 10,001 litres to 15 lakh litres, the rates per 1,000 litres are the same for both categories: Rs.18. For more than 15 lakh litres, both sections will have to pay Rs. 22.50 for every 1,000 litres.

Resolution

In a resolution moved at the Corporation Council meeting on Monday, the civic body said the cost of the Pilloor Phase II Drinking Water Scheme was expected to rise from Rs. 113 crore to Rs. 140 crore.

The increase in tariff was one way to meet the rising project cost, especially when the Corporation had to meet 30 per cent of the project cost while the rest would come in the form of grants from the Central and State Governments.

Tariff increase

The Corporation's share of about Rs. 50 crore should be transferred from its fund to that of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission under which the project would be implemented. Tariff increase was the major option on hand.

Councillors, however, disagreed with the proposal. Even before the agenda was taken up for discussion, Leader of the Opposition V.N. Udayakumar moved a resolution on behalf of all the parties to demand that the tariff increase be kept in abeyance.

Sewerage service

The Council also deferred a decision on sewerage service charges, saying the rates should be first discussed in an all-party meeting