

# Borewell stands by for elusive Cauvery

## It meets the water requirements of 300 families in Lakshmisagar Layout

Satish Shile

**BANGALORE:** Residents of Lakshmisagar Layout in Mahadevpura have not faced shortage of drinking water in the past 25 years. Every alternate day they are assured of drinking water supply for at least 45 minutes to one hour. The monthly water bill is a mere Rs 75, thanks to the Lakshmisagar Residents' Welfare Association.

As many as 300 families in the locality get water supply from a borewell sunk by the Association 25 years ago. They are dependant on the private borewell as they have no assured supply of Cauvery water by the BWSSB. The Board took up the augmentation of the Cauvery Stage IV to supply Cauvery water to the erstwhile CMC areas, including Mahadevpura under the JnNURM. The project was commissioned and completed in December, 2007. However, the project has proved to be of little use to residents of Lakshmisagar Layout. Only houses located nearer to the main pipeline get regular supply of Cauvery water, while the others hardly get water. Hence, they have no source of water apart from the private borewell.

In the 1980s, residents of



Valve man Pahaladi on duty. DH PHOTO

Lakshmisagar Layout had 15 houses. They had to fetch water from distant places for many years. The then Mahadevpura CMC had no system in place to ensure regular water supply to the residents of the Layout. Residents Veerabrahmaiah, Narasimhamurthy, Kariyappa, Parvathe Gowda and a few others joined together to find a solution to the crisis. Patel Narayanappa, a landlord, whose land had been converted into a residential layout, suggested that the residents drill a borewell of their own. Later, an Association was formed and each of the members contributed Rs 500.

The Association with the

help of the then MLA Ashwath Narayana Reddy, received an assistance of Rs 12,500 from the Block Development Office to sink borewell under 'no water, no money' basis. Luckily, the borewell yielded water and the Association got financial assistance. In the initial stages the Association spent Rs 20,000 towards securing power supply, installing motor and laying pipeline to 16 houses, the first beneficiaries.

"Those days we got water throughout the day," recounted Sumitramma, one of the first beneficiaries.

"However, as the number of beneficiaries increased, supply of drinking water was restricted to short duration," she said.



Women fetching water supplied from the private borewell at Lakshmisagar Layout in Mahadevpura in Bangalore.

DH PHOTO

The Association has appointed Pahaladi, a native of Uttar Pradesh, as valve-man. He has been a resident of the Layout for the past three decades. He monitors the water supply.

"At present more than 300 families get water from the borewell. I have to operate 40 valves. I decide the duration of water supply depending upon the number of taps connected

### Scheme has benefited only a few

People in the newly added areas of BBMP have been demanding supply of Cauvery water for many years. Even though, they paid initial deposit for the project in 2005-06, they will be supplied with Cauvery water only in 2011, after the completion of Stage IV Phase II of Cauvery Water Supply Scheme.

However, only 72 wards among the 225 wards in the erstwhile CMC areas got Cauvery water in 2008, after the BWSSB completed augmentation of 100 MLD of water under Phase I. The public, however, allege that the scheme has benefited only a few, as the quantity of water supplied is insufficient.

### Citizens' drive

- Initial cost - Rs 20,000
- Monthly water charge - Rs 75/month/house
- 300 families are benefited
- Monthly expenditure - Rs 15,000

Rs 15,000 a month. We have stopped extending the pipeline. However, those who build new houses in the locality, where the pipeline has already been laid will get the water connection. The initial fee for securing the water connection will be Rs 5,000," said Narasimhamurthy, a resident.

T Rangaswamy, one of the residents, took up the responsibility of collecting the monthly water charge, when the system was introduced. He also took care of the financial transaction. "He was very efficient and sincere in executing his duty. Now, after his demise his son R Vijay Kumar has taken up the responsibility," said Parvathe Gowda, one of the Association's founders.

**DH News Service**

to each valve. The duration may vary from 45 minutes to one hour," said Pahaladi.

Water charge which used to be a mere Rs 10 when the system was introduced has now risen to Rs 75. The amount collected from the beneficiaries is spent towards maintenance of the pipeline, motor and salary of the valve man.

"The expenditure comes to