

**State of the City**  
**Water**



## PROBLEMS

- Water security is critical as the population continues to grow. Current plans rely on bringing more water from far-off places by diverting rivers.
- Although the metropolitan region receives a reasonable amount of rain annually, very little is harvested.
- IBWSSB has historically delivered water only to those who have a piped connection. This has left nearly half the city without the public service.
- Infrastructure for water management is old and in need of upgradation and/or replacement.
- Commons water is widely extracted by the public with almost no regulation.
- Pricing of water is ad hoc. There is no guarantee of lifeline supply, and much of the subsidy is aimed at the rich and middle class.
- Water quality is a big unknown, but it is widely believed to be below the appropriate levels for healthy human use.
- • Re-use of treated water is minimal.

## THEREFORE ...

- A comprehensive water security plan for the city, known as Innundu Cauvery, was announced by the government a few years ago. It needs to be operationalised.
- Extraction and sale of ground water must be brought under the management of BWSSB.
- BWSSB must accept responsibility for supplying water to all legal buildings. Where supply of water is not immediately possible through piped lines, it must do so by other means.
- BWSSB must hire hydro-geologists, conservation experts, communication experts, and other experts to build its in-house capacity.
- The BWSSB and the Pollution Control Board must measure and maintain records of water quality and communicate the risks of contaminated water to citizens.
- The Urban Development Policy adopted a decade ago promised to establish a regulator for urban services (including water). This should be done immediately.
- A lifeline water program should be created to ensure a minimum supply of quality water to poor citizens.