

Ch 9 Public Facilities

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Exercises

1. Why do you think there are so few cases of private water supply in the world?

Answer

There are very few cases of private water supply in the world because water is an essential amenity. Water supply is a public facility that every government must provide to all citizens of a State. In cases where water supply was placed in the hands of private companies, the prices of water rose, making it unaffordable to the masses. This resulted in riots, protests and violent demonstrations in countries like Bolivia. Hence, it has been deemed best that the government must handle water supply services.

2. Do you think water in Chennai is available to and affordable by all? Discuss.

Answer

Water in Chennai is not available to and affordable by all. Availability of a good, regular water supply is proportionate to the level of income one earns, in this city. Senior government officials in areas like Anna Nagar can get a whole water tanker arranged for themselves; most areas like Mylapore get water once in two days; in Madipakkam, people buy bottled water for drinking purposes but the situation is the worst in slums. Here, water supply runs for barely an hour everyday from a single tap serving over thirty families for all their water needs.

3. How is the sale of water by farmers to water dealers in Chennai affecting the local people? Do you think local people can object to such exploitation of ground water? Can the government do anything in this regard?

Answer

The sale of water by farmers to water dealers in Chennai is affecting the local people in various ways:

→ The water they are taking away is for irrigation of agriculture. Because of this exploitation irrigation and so, agriculture is bound to suffer.

→ This water is also for general supply and drinking purpose of the villagers. → As a result of the heavy exploitation of water, the ground water levels dropped drastically in these areas.

Yes, the local people can object to such heavy exploitation of ground water since it is a public facility or nature's gift on which everyone has equal right and so nobody can sell or take away exclusively.

The Government needs to play a crucial role to find out a suitable alternative in this regard. Our Constitution recognizes many of the public facilities including access to safe drinking water, as being a part of the Right to Life. So, the Government must see that these rights are protected so that everyone can lead a decent life.

4. Why are most of the private hospitals and private schools located in major cities and not in towns or rural areas?

Answer

The distribution of public facilities in our country is inadequate and largely unfair. For example, urban areas are provided with and consume more electricity than villages or townships. Most metropolitan cities consume vast amounts of power for market-places, multiplexes and air-conditioning while villages and towns bear huge power-cuts even in summer so much so that there is no electricity available to them for domestic purposes too. This is a gaping gap in the distribution of just one of the public facilities provided by the government.

9. Private educational institutions - schools, colleges, universities, technical and vocational training institutes are coming up in our country in a big way. On the other hand, educational institutes run by the government are becoming relatively less important. What do you think would be the impact of this? Discuss.

Answer

Private educational institutions levy very high fees, which only affluent people can afford. So quality education will be the right of only the rich. If educational institutions run by the government are not up to the mark, the weaker sections of the society are deprived of quality education. The end result of this disparity will be that only the rich will get good education while the poor will be deprived of it.