

The World Bank

INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

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October 14, 2005

Ms. Madhu Bhaduri
Convenor
Right to Water Campaign
A 12, IFS Apartments
Mayur Vihar Phase -1
New Delhi

Dear Ms Bhaduri:

Subject : Your invitation to “public hearing” on proposed Delhi Water Reform Project

This refers to your letter of October 4 to our Country Director, Mr. Michael Carter, inviting him or a representative to a "public hearing" on the proposed Delhi water reform project on October 17.

In extending this invitation, you say that the response of our office to Parivartan's "repeated" contacts has been "completely unsatisfactory." We strongly refute this allegation. Parivartan has not made "repeated" contacts. We have received only two letters from them - in the first instance, we invited them along with other civil society bodies to discuss these issues, explain our role and position, and answer queries (which they attended). We have also replied to their second letter, in which serious allegations against the Bank were made. However, we are yet to receive a response from Parivartan to our reply.

We are also disturbed to see the deliberate misrepresentations and mischaracterizations of the World Bank's actions and intentions being made in public and through the press by members of your network. We have ourselves advocated and have warmly welcomed the idea of a public debate on Delhi's water problems, and have lauded in particular Parivartan's initial role in injecting transparency and accountability. But we are disappointed to see your colleagues run a misleading campaign instead of orchestrating a meaningful discussion on the real issue: what are the options and models by which citizens can enforce accountability on their water service provider, and receive a reliable, sustainable and affordable water supply.

The very fact that the focus of your campaign is on the Bank, instead of the decision makers of the city and the entity that is directly answerable to citizens and which should be at the center of the discussion, the Delhi Jal Board, indicates the misdirected nature of the debate.

In light of the tenor of the public discussion of recent weeks, we cannot have confidence that the event you are organising is intended to be constructive. We will therefore not be able to attend the event. We however reiterate our standing invitation to you and your colleagues to meet with us when mutually convenient to clarify any of your questions.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,



for Sumir Lal
Advisor, External Affairs

Right to Water Campaign

Right to Water Campaign
A12, IFS Apartments
Mayur Vihar Ph-I
Delhi
Ph: 011.22752445, 20507339

October 4, 2005

Mr. Michael Carter, Country Director India
World Bank
70 Lodi Estate
New Delhi, 110 003

Dear Mr. Carter:

Subject: Water Distribution Restructuring, Jansunwai Participation

The Right to Water Campaign (RWC) has many questions regarding 24/7, and has approached the Delhi Government, the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) and the World Bank repeatedly for clarifications. Via the RTI, we procured upwards of 4000 documents on the matter. The RWC processed these documents and found serious flaws and pitfalls in the plan. Subsequent, independent investigations by teams of experts from IIT and IIM have confirmed our findings and raised more concerns.

Your office has been repeatedly contacted by Parivartan, which is a member of the Right to Water Campaign (RWC), regarding our concerns with water and sewerage issues in the State of Delhi. Unfortunately, the cooperation provided by the various parties involved, including your office, has been completely unsatisfactory. We have had to resort to the Right to Information Act (RTI) to procure documents showing that the Delhi Jal Board, along with the Delhi Government and with assistance from the World Bank, initiated a program to restructure parts of the Delhi water and sewerage systems.

To clarify and openly debate this extremely important matter, we are holding a Jansunwai (public hearing) on 17 October 2005, starting at 10:30 AM, at the Gandhi Peace Foundation at Rau's Avenue Road, Opposite Dyal Singh Library, ITO, New Delhi. The hearing will be conducted by a panel including Former Water Resources Secretary Ramaswamy Iyer, Former Supreme Court Justices S. C. Aggarwal and D. P. Wadhwa, and noted international author Arundhati Roy, in the presence of the media.

In addition to issues regarding the project itself, several questions are expected to be raised on the role of the World Bank in this process. To respond to these questions, we request your presence as a representative of your institution. If you cannot participate personally, we would be happy to accept an informed representative.

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Our hope is that your presence as a participant and respondent will help provide a serious, open forum for the airing of these concerns. The primary objective of this public hearing is to provide a platform for all stakeholders to raise their issues publicly and open their concerns to public debate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Madhu Bhaduri". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Madhu Bhaduri
Convenor
Right to Water Campaign