Economic growth in Indian cities in the period following the liberalization of the Indian economy in the early 1990s has put tremendous pressure on urban infrastructures and services. In response to a growing infrastructure deficit, privatization emerged as the preferred mode of infrastructure delivery with a great sense of urgency. But privatization assumes prior government ownership of urban infrastructure assets and services. Certain aspects of waste management services such as waste collection have never been truly public, in the sense that private informal actors have historically provided those services in urban India. How does the state privatize something that was never in the public domain to begin with? Come find out!