

News from India

Keep City Clean or Pay a Fine: BMC

If the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has its way, Mumbai will soon be a 'fine' city. To ensure that contractors keep the city clean, the civic body will institute fines, if there is a violation of the clauses of the contract.

BMC has started the process of drawing lots to choose the contractors for clearing the garbage in the city, based on a model already operational in Hyderabad, wherein the civic body has inserted clauses in the contract with contractors. A violation of any of the clauses could mean heavy fines.

For instance if a single worker of the contractor is absent for work, then a fine of Rs 150 will be levied on the contractor. If the supervisor is absent for a single day, then the fine goes up to Rs 160.

Additional Municipal Commissioner Subrat Ratho on whose initiative the Hyderabad model took shape, said that the fines were a

means to keep the contractors in check and to achieve an effective control over them.

"We want to ensure tighter supervision on the work being done. Elected councillors and even the public could help us by pointing out where the contractors are defaulting. It will eventually help the people and make the city look more clean," said Ratho.

Predictably the scheme has sent the old BMC contractors who till now had a monopoly, scurrying for cover. In the last fortnight, these contractors have appealed to the Municipal Commissioner Karun Srivastava to defer the scheme.

The old contractors' fears are based on the fact that if the project is a success, then the civic administration will replicate them in all the wards.

Currently, the project is on only in 15 wards of the suburbs. The civic administration will keep the scheme



on for seven months to see the impact it is having.

The 15 wards have been divided into 324 units, and 273 groups or small contractors have been lined up for doing the work. The lots were drawn at Nair hospital.

The contractors should start the work within the next few days after some formalities are completed.

Varied rates of fines are levied for different kinds of violations. Serious violations could mean cancellation of the contract.

(Source: Mid-Day, 21st February, 2004)

International News

Japan's Toray Industries, BASF set up Plastics Venture in Malaysia

Toray Industries Inc., Japan's top maker of synthetic fibres, said it would set up a plastics joint venture in Malaysia with BASF Ag, the world's biggest chemical firm by sales. BASF Ag is investing heavily in Asia, a key growth region for the company.

The German chemicals giant and Toray will produce polybutylene terephthalate, a climate and heat resistant plastic used in cars and electronic components.



The venture is due to begin early in 2006 and annual output is expected to be around 60,000 tons. It is the first joint venture involving the two firms.

Do You Know

For every seven trucks needed to deliver paper grocery bags to the store - only one truck is needed to carry the same number of plastic grocery bags!