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PMC school board seeks corporate help

PUNE: With the shadow of a financial crisis looming large over the civic budget for the next fiscal, the Pune Municipal Corporation's (PMC) school board has decided to seek corporate help for the smooth functioning of its schools.

Ravindra Chaudhari, newly-elected chairman of the school board, on Monday said: "There are signs that the annual civic budget is going to face a crunch. In this situation, we are not sure how much funds will be allocated to the school board. Therefore, we have decided to seek help of corporate houses to cater to the needs of civic schools."

The board has already approached some companies, who Chaudhari said have expressed their willingness to help. "We will ask them to shoulder some responsibilities such as beautification of the school premises and providing educational material. We want to ensure that students don't suffer due to budget constraints."

The PMC runs as many as 320 schools in the city, including Marathi, English and Urdu medium. More than 1 lakh students study in these schools. "I am going to take up the issue with the Mahratta Chamber of Commerce Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA) officials. I hope MCCIA to help the school board.

Corporate help will enable us to bring these schools on par with private ones," said Chaudhari.

Chaudhari admitted that students passing out of PMC-run primary schools find it difficult to get admissions in private secondary schools. "We are planning to start more secondary schools because private educational institutes are denying admission to PMC school students. We are also going to talk with private school administrations in this regard," he said.