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20 BMC officials named in Rs 3crore e-tendering scam

MUMBAI: The preliminary report on BMC's e-tendering scam indicates that more than 20 civic officials had indulged in malpractices while operating the online system which invites tenders for minor ward-level works. The report is expected to be submitted to civic commissioner Sitaram Kunte soon.

Earlier, 16 officials, including an assistant commissioner, had been named in the scam. Devendra Amberkar, opposition leader in the House, demanded suspension of officials involved in the scam. He also said that contractors who were part of the syndicate be blacklisted.

The matter was also discussed at the group leaders meeting held on Monday. "Though officials are trying to cover up the matter saying the losses were not much, a malpractice has taken place in the system. E-tendering was introduced to bring in transparency, but the purpose seems to have been defeated," said Amberkar.

An official said that the preliminary findings of the committee that was formed, under deputy municipal commissioner Vasant Prabhu, to look into the matter will be submitted to Kunte, who has the right to suspend the accused.

The loss is being estimated at nearly Rs 3 crore, the official added.

Meanwhile, BJP leader Vivekanand Gupta on Monday filed a complaint with the Anti-Corruption Bureau, alleging a nexus between civic officials, contractors and the company that developed the software.

"The preliminary inquiry report that has been submitted by the MCGM Test Audit and Vigilance Officer (TAVO) names senior civic officials who awarded around 49 contracts to a favored set of contractors. The TAVO has found that sub engineers and executive engineers from nine wards are involved in the scam. If the engineers are not being suspended, it is surprising," said Gupta.