

Indian Express 6.11.2009

Hawker zone awaits general body go-ahead

The PMC standing committee approved Rs ten crore budgetary allocation for a special cell, police station and a court for checking the illegal construction and encroachment, including that by hawkers, in its jurisdiction recently.

However, the civic administration still awaits the general body approval for amendments in its hawker policy so that it can introduce hawker-free zones in the city.

“We have made appropriate amendments as per the guidelines of the state government. Thus, the implementation would be done only after it is cleared by the general body,” said Pravin Ashtikar, PMC deputy municipal commissioner.

According to the amendment, the ‘no-hawkers’ zone will be divided into permanent and temporary categories. In temporary categories, hawkers will be allowed on specific days and time only.

The general body, in February 2008, had approved the hawkers policy after a lot of deliberation. A total of 45 roads in the city have been

short-listed for 'no hawkers zone' and rehabilitation of the hawkers has been on cards.

"The civic administration is struggling to find sufficient locations to rehabilitate hawkers. The rehabilitation projects are being executed through JNNURM funds," he said.

Recently, Municipal Commissioner Mahesh Zagade and Police Commissioner Satyapal Singh, as per the Bombay High Court directions, had visited Tulshibaug to review illegal encroachment and unauthorised hawkers.

The civic standing committee decision on approval of a special squad has come thereafter to create 677 additional vacancies along with special police stations and courts.

The PMC had tabled the proposal on amended hawkers policy in the general body in September and is still awaiting a go ahead. "Everything depends on the general body which is expected to witness a heated discussion on the issue once again," Ashtikar said

There are around 10,200 hawkers registered with the civic body. However, a fresh survey will be taken up again.

Meanwhile, the construction of buildings for hawkers is going on at Baner, Kharadi, Wadgaonsheri, Vadgaon Budruk and Parvati where 1,127 hawkers will be rehabilitated.