

**The Hindu      27.07.2009**

## **Upper castes pose problem for sanitation in BMC**

Staff Reporter

BERHAMPUR: Upper castes do not feel shy to get appointed as sweepers but they usually shy away from doing the job.

In Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BMC) the upper caste persons appointed as sweepers are a major hindrance in the maintenance of sanitation in the city, alleged the 'Mahanagar Mehentar Karmachari Sangh (MMKS)'. It is the union of sanitary workers appointed by the BMC either on regular or temporary basis. On Sunday the members of the union held a rally and meeting to protest against proposed privatisation of sanitary work in 10 wards of the BMC.

The adviser of the Anil Nayak said at present there were over 700 sanitary workers with the BMC. They included the regular as well as the temporary ones. But out of them, over 150 temporary sanitary workers happened to be upper castes like Brahmin, Karan etc.

He alleged that these upper caste persons were not ready to wield brooms and clean roads and drains although they were appointed for it as they felt it was the work of lower castes. The union leaders alleged that these upper caste sweepers were getting paid without doing the work for which they were appointed.

The municipal officials said the appointment of upper castes for the post of sweepers did not violate any appointment norms as the no appointments are made on caste basis.

Meanwhile, the sanitary workers of the BMC on Sunday decided to oppose the privatisation of cleaning in the city.

They alleged that despite several requests the BMC chairperson and Commissioner were not calling them up for discussions. In their meeting they decided to hand over a 14 days notice to the BMC authorities on July 29, if the BMC authorities did not call them up for discussion over the privatisation issue till then. "We would start democratic agitation," they said.

According to sources cleaning of 10 wards of the city is to be privatised from July 30. It is being opposed by the sanitary workers of the BMC.