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## Estimate running into Rs 2 crore, but MC only manages to collect Rs 9 lakh as house tax in a month

City residents seem to be going slow when it comes to paying property tax on residential property. A month after the process of collection was initiated, the Municipal Corporation has collected around Rs 9 lakh so far. The estimate by the civic body had pegged the collection at Rs 2 crore.

Self-assessment of the tax is to be done by the residents by December 14. Thereafter, the civic body will start imposing fine.

The notification of house tax was made by the UT Administration on July 4. The tax has to be paid at the rate of Re 1 per sq yard for a period of one year. Houses below five marla as well as those in villages and colonies have been exempted from the ambit of taxes. Residents of LIG houses are also exempt from the tax. There are around 81,000 houses that fall under the ambit of house tax.

However, with half of the time for self-assessment already having lapsed, collections have been dismal. MC Joint Commissioner Rajiv Gupta insists that as the deadline is approaching, the number of people depositing tax has increased. "In the initial week, the collection was just a few thousand. Now it has picked up and is in lakhs. It is expected to increase as the deadline approaches," says Gupta.

The residents of five-marla houses are required to pay Rs 125 while those owning six-marla houses will have to pay Rs 150 per year. The amount is Rs 187.50 for 7.5-marla houses, Rs 200 for eight-marla, Rs 250 for 10-marla, Rs 275 for 11-marla, Rs 375 for 15-marla and Rs 500 for one-canal house.

The residents can download the form from the website of the Municipal Corporation. The facility to pay the tax is available at the e-sampark and gram sampark centres. At these centres, the residents will have to pay Rs 9 and Rs 4 respectively as transaction charges. In case of non-payment of tax within the stipulated time, the defaulters will have to pay 25 per cent extra along with an interest at 12 per cent or as amended. The rate of interest will be applicable and payable till the end of the month in which payment is made.

The house tax was imposed for fulfilling a condition under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). The UT Administration had been sending repeated reminders to the MC for imposing tax. It was approved by the MC House in February this year amidst a ruckus. The administration had also directed the MC to review the amount of tax being charged. A report for the same has been prepared wherein a 20 per cent hike in the tax rate has been proposed.