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## BBMP slaps tax notices on Covid-weary Bengalureans



Property owners in BBMP limits pay property tax after self-assessment, either online or offline at a BBMP office, after filling a form which asks for details like property area, whether it's being used by the owner or if it has been rented out. BENGALURU: Thousands of property owners are furious as

### BBMP

has slapped notices on them, alleging they have under-assessed their property tax since 2016-17 and demanded payment of the shortfall along with interest till date.

Girish Nag M, a resident of JP Nagar, said: "We've been paying property tax as per the BBMP website. Now, it's accusing us of evading taxes. BBMP is asking us to pay penalties for the past four years. Who has the money as we've all been hit by Covid-19?"

BBMP chief commissioner Gaurav Gupta said, “We’re looking into the matter. The zones were specified and some people chose the wrong zones. We haven’t changed the category of zones in the recent past. We’ll take a decision after assessing the situation.”

The special commissioner, revenue department, of the civic agency was not available for comment.

The city is divided into six zones based on guidance value of properties for computation of property tax and it varies from zone to zone. During 2016-17, the boundaries of zones that determine property tax were redrawn and many wards moved into zones where property tax was higher.

Property owners in BBMP limits pay property tax after self-assessment, either online or offline at a BBMP office, after filling a form which asks for details like property area, whether it’s being used by the owner or if it has been rented out.

Citizens put on notice say BBMP should not have waited four years to rectify things.

“It should have informed us in the beginning. We have been sent notices now for choosing the wrong zone and paying less property tax. I have to pay over Rs 8,000 and a penalty of Rs 16,000 as well as interest of Rs 8,000, that’s a total of Rs 32,000,” Girish added.

Although the notice is dated February, it was issued to Girish and several other citizens from across wards only three weeks ago.

“They probably waited for Covid-19 to wane a bit before issuing notices. What the Palike doesn’t understand is that the city is recovering from Covid-19. Many of us have incurred losses, especially commercial establishments, and been asked to pay a fine of Rs 3 Lakh,” Girish added.

Amba Prasad, a resident of [Vysya Bank Colony](#), Arekere, also received the BBMP notice a few weeks ago. “As soon as I upload my PID (Property Identification number), all details about the property show up. The tax is automatically calculated and I just have to pay the amount. It should have ensured everything was changed four years ago. Instead, it has sent us notices with just 30 days to revert. In our colony, 25 residents received this notice. We now plan to write to

BBMP and also approach the former corporator for assistance,” she said.

Sathya Kumar, a resident of [Mysore Bank Colony](#), said, “During these difficult times, while other governments are waiving taxes, BBMP is imposing penalties on us for no fault of ours. Such harassment is not fair. Resident groups should come together to file a petition against this.”