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'Extend deadline for tax payment'

Special Correspondent

BANGALORE: M. Ramachandrappa and S.T. Somasekhar, spokespersons of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee, on Monday demanded that Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike Commissioner Bharat Lal Meena extend the deadline for payment of property tax due for 2008-09, up to March 2010.

Addressing presspersons, they urged Mr. Meena not to burden the owners with any penalty, who would pay property tax after June 30, the deadline fixed by the BBMP. It was the State Government and the BBMP, which were guilty of not collecting the tax from the owners in the city and the defaulters should not be penalised with a monthly interest of 2 per cent from July 1, they said. It worked out to 24 per cent, a year, which was more than what the banks charged.

Moreover, under the Karnataka Municipalities Act, the owners could pay property tax during the whole year and it should not be restricted to only two months. They alleged that the Commissioner had been represented a few days ago in this regard, but he had not replied to their memorandum.

The leaders said that more than 35 per cent of the owners, especially the poor and women/widows had not paid the property tax and urged that they should be given sufficient time to pay it. Instead of winning the confidence of the citizens, they alleged that the BBMP was threatening them with seizure and auctioning the properties.