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677 posts, special police stations, courts to curb illegal constructions

Grappling with rising number of illegal constructions and encroachments within its jurisdiction, the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) has decided to create 677 additional vacancies along with provision of special police stations and courts to bring down the illegal structures. The annual expense for the project is Rs 9.8 crore.

“The population of the city has been increasing at a rapid pace. There has been increase in illegal constructions in the city along with encroachment on government lands,” standing committee chairman Nilesh Nikam said on Tuesday.

The state government had directed the civic bodies throughout the state to initiate steps to check illegal structures within their jurisdiction and if need be increase the existing staff, he said. “The existing staff strength is unable to carry the job and additional staff is a must.”

The standing committee has approved the civic administration's proposal to recruit additional staff of 677 for the anti-encroachment drive with 500 civil staff, 132 civil police, 28 for police stations and 17 for the special court, Nikam said.

The budgetary provision of Rs 9.8 crore for the purpose will be only for salaries while administrative expenses, including place for special police station and court are not included in the allotted expenditure, he added.

In its proposal, the civic administration said it would have to establish a separate cell of 500 people for anti-encroachment drive that will be headed by Deputy Municipal Commissioner.

The staff will be scattered in all the 144 wards to continuously monitor the illegal activity and initiate immediate action. The existing civic staff is merely of 72 people. The staff would be provided with vehicles and digital cameras to carry out their responsibility.

The demand of 132 security staff for the squad will be made to the city police headquarters and the team will be led by officer of the level of Deputy Commissioner of Police or Additional Police Superintendent.

“The police recruitment will be carried out by the city police while the PMC will incur the expense for the salaries,” Nikam said.

If need be a special police station would be set up to cater to the offences related to illegal construction and encroachment with a provision of at least 28 personnel for the police station.

The state government has also called for constituting special court for handling the cases related to illegal construction and encroachment, and additional staff of 17 has to be recruited for the purpose with the civic body incurring all the expenses.