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BBMP to develop software to check revenue leakage

On its radar would be owners underreporting their tax dues

One of the last few important decisions that the previous Commissioner Siddaiah took towards improving resource mobilisation of the financially ailing Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is to integrate the database of trade licences, properties and advertisements, specifically shop advertisements.

According to sources within the BBMP, Mr. Siddaiah, when in office, directed the civic authority's IT department to develop a software that integrates the database. The Chief Health Officer, whose office issues trade licences, and the Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) have been instructed to work with the IT department.

Ad taxes

The software will be dependent on the GIS (geographical information system) data. With GIS, the BBMP officials will be able to ascertain if any name board that is displayed outside

shops is bigger than the specified size (6 ft x 4 ft). “If it is bigger, the BBMP will issue demand notices and collect advertisement tax from these commercial establishments,” an official said.

BBMP has captured all properties in the city through GIS and even issued the property identity (PID) number. By linking trade licence with the PID, the BBMP hopes to detect the property owners who have made false declarations under Self-Assessment Scheme and underreported their tax.

“Some owners would have declared their properties are being used for residential purposes, even though they may be used for commercial purposes. Through GIS and physical verification, we can detect such cases, collect the dues to BBMP from them by issuing demand notices and updating the database,” the source said.

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The BBMP has data from Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) about the number of commercial

establishments.

The civic authority, which has been taking up drives to increase the number of trade licences, has issued 50,000 licences. “The BBMP’s target is to collect Rs. 200 crore by issuing two lakh trade licences. We are getting only Rs. 50 crore from trade licences,” a revenue official told *The Hindu* on condition of anonymity.

With revenue mobilisation being crucial to the BBMP, it is now up to the new Commissioner to take this forward and check revenue leakage.