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## Property tax arrears mount to Rs 568 crore

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CHENNAI: With the Chennai Corporation's property tax arrears (now) staggering at Rs 568 crore and collecting it from the defaulters going to be a mammoth exercise, the civic body is now engaged in a novel scheme to 'intimate' them through posters in front of their property itself.

According to a senior Corporation official, 1193 defaulters owe them property tax arrears in the band of Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh each, and 434 among them owe more than Rs 10 lakh to the civic body's tax kitty. The accumulated arrears of the 434 defaulters alone is said to be around Rs 170 crore.

In the first phase, the civic body has started putting up posters at the premises of 434 'premium' defaulters saying they have property tax arrears to them and in the second phase, premises of defaulters falling in the band of Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh would also be pasted with such arrears notices.

Of the Rs 568-crore property tax arrears in the city, zones in North Chennai account for around Rs 125 crore, while the zone in central and south Chennai account for remaining Rs 443 crore.

According to civic body sources, top defaulters' list include several high profile hotels in the city.

### **COMMITTEE TO STUDY CIVIC EMPLOYEES' GRIEVANCES:**

In the wake of resentments among the staff over surrendering of several posts in the Chennai Corporation under the pretext of introducing administrative reforms, Mayor M Subramanian on Monday announced the constitution of a committee of officials and trade union representatives to settle the issue amicably.

Express had carried a news item on the plight of the civic body employees in the wake of reported surrendering of several posts in July. The news item had created a ripple among the staff and the anger led to the civic body to postpone their decision of surrendering posts for few more weeks.

The Mayor said that the committee would submit a detailed report on administrative reforms by September- end.

During the meeting, he disclosed that more than 5,300 posts like cinema operator, gollah, blacksmith had been lying vacant for the past 10 years and that if those unfilled posts were

surrendered, the civic body might get additional and other important postings in different departments.