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## Civic spending touches Rs. 1,000 crore

Chennai Corporation has completed civic development works to the tune of Rs. 1,000 crore before the onset on the northeast monsoon for the first time ever in a financial year.

With a number of works underway in various parts of the city, the civic body is likely to implement works to the tune of Rs. 2,000 crore by March 31. However, many works in various parts of the city remain incomplete ahead of the onset of monsoon. Residents meanwhile are demanding the completion of unfinished works on roads, stormwater drains and footpaths before the onset of the monsoon.

Officials attributed the delay in the completion of some works to constraints pertaining to the release of funds. The civic body is in a scramble to mobilise the required funds from financial institutions for the ambitious development projects proposed by the Chennai Corporation Council. More than Rs.100 crore is yet to be released for works completed already.

Ahmed, a resident of Perambur High Road, said incomplete work on the stormwater drain near Jamalia Bus Stop was bothering residents. “The work commenced two months ago. The work has been disrupted for 20 days after digging up a 200-feet-long stretch,” he said.

“Many cement concrete roads remain incomplete. Contractors have stopped work on stormwater drains midway,” said a resident of Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar.

A major revamp of the road network covering more than 10,000 interior roads was underway in many parts of the city. Most of the works have been stalled. Last year, the civic body had spent Rs. 555 crore on roads — about forty per cent of its capital expenditure.

By the end of the last financial year, the Chennai Corporation’s expenditure on development of civic infrastructure had touched an all-time high of Rs. 1,392 crore. The civic body spent only Rs. 705 crore on civic infrastructure in 2012-’13. The per capita expenditure on civic infrastructure in the city is expected to touch Rs. 3,000 in 2014-2015 if the civic body initiates measures to overcome challenges to mobilisation of funds for major projects.

***This is the first time that expenditure of this magnitude has been made in a financial year***

***However, a lot of work remains incomplete due to issues with the release of funds***