

DUMP SITES THAT FLOUT NORMS TO BE SHUT: GOVT

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MUMBAI: Coming up with a comprehensive mechanism for proper implementation of municipal solid waste rules, the state assured the Bombay HC that dumping sites that do not comply with environment laws would be shut within three months.

The assurance came in response to a bunch of PILs raising concern over non-compliance of norms and environment laws while dumping waste in several urban areas.

Deonar dump: Contractor was declared unfit earlier

STINKING GROUND Despite this, BMC re-evaluated the firm, gave it the contract

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MUMBAI: Two days after chief minister Prithviraj Chavan ordered a special investigation team (SIT) to probe into the alleged malpractices in the city's dumping grounds projects worth Rs 9,500 crore, a closer look at the chronology of events reveals that the controversies surrounding the Deonar dumping ground date back to even before its approval.

Right from the contractor being declared technically unfit to handle a project of this scale to the civic standing panel scrapping and then approving it without any precedent, the project was mired in controversies.

The consultant appointed to help the civic body, IL&FS had, in May 2008, written to the civic body stating clearly that the two companies which had participated in the bid — UPL, which finally won the contract, and Ramky enviro engineers — had failed to qualify technically.

Despite this, the BMC persisted and decided to 're-evaluate' these companies. "This time, the BMC changed the marking patterns, going against the pattern specified in the contract," said a civic official, who was part of the solid waste management department then.

As a result, UPL qualified. This meant that only one bidder qualified for the next round. Even here, the practice of not awarding contracts to cases where there was single bid was junked.

A civic official said, "It is so shocking that procedural precautions which we would have taken even for a Rs 10 crore tender were ignored in a tender as big as this."

"We reject these allegations outright and maintain that a transparent and fair process of evaluation was followed," UPL sources said.

Additional municipal commissioner Mohan Aditani declined to comment.

Sites flouting norms to be shut in 3 months

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MUMBAI: Coming up with a comprehensive mechanism for proper implementation of municipal solid waste rules, the state government assured the Bombay high court that dumping sites that do not comply with the environment laws would be shut within three months. The government also assured the court that waste-processing facilities would be set up at dumping sites across the state within two-and-half years.

The assurance came in response to a bunch of public interest litigations raising con-

cern over non-compliance of solid waste rules and environment laws while dumping waste in urban areas of the Mumbai Metropolitan region, Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad.

According to a statement submitted before the division bench of justice AM Khanwilkar and justice Ashok Bhagale on April 2, for spots where the dumping sites are to be shut owing to non-compliance, officers of the local authority concerned will start acquisition of alternative sites designated for dumping grounds within two weeks. The process of selection of sites and acquisition of land concerned will be completed in six weeks.

After receiving a rap from the bench for neglecting proper implementation of rules, the state government has come up with an organisational set up for ensuring proper implementation of rules and environmental aspects of waste management.

Commissioners of municipal corporations, chief officers of municipal councils and collectors will be in-charge of the implementation of the rules. The secretary of urban development department will be the overall in-charge and will be primarily responsible for supervising and monitoring solid waste management sites and waste processing.

HOW THE PROPOSAL GOT SANCTIONED

DEC 5, 2008

The proposal for Deonar is first put up before the panel; it says rates are too high

MARCH 25, 2009

The proposal is brought again, after reducing the rates, but the panel does not decide on it

MAY 25, 2009

The proposal is tabled again; an enraged committee scraps the proposal and asks for re-tendering

JULY 14, 2009

Going against the directions, the administration tables the same proposal again; this time, the committee approves it

THE DEONAR DUMPING GROUND STORY

The project for scientifically closing a part of the Deonar dumping ground, creating a landfill site and treating waste has been plagued with problems from conception.

FLAWED BIDDING PROCESS

Of the 10 companies which showed interest, only UPL Ltd and Ramky Enviro engineers Ltd were participating in the bidding process

However, in the technical evaluation, both these companies failed to make the cut. IL&FS, the

consultant, wrote to the BMC saying that these companies were not technically qualified for the project

Rather than calling for tenders again, the BMC decided to 're-evaluate' both these companies

After the re-evaluation, UPL Ltd was declared as technically qualified

POLITICAL CULPABILITY

When the proposal first came to the civic standing panel, the committee protested against it and called the rates offered by UPL as 'too high'

The administration then slightly reduced the rates and presented the proposal again

This time, the enraged committee -

decided to scrap the proposal altogether and asked the BMC to float fresh tenders in 21 days and get new bidders

Disobeying these directions, the administration decided to bring the same proposal back, without making any changes

Then, the panel passed it without asking for any changes

