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Rs. 700-crore unutilised: councillor

Staff Reporter

Proposed bus service may become a burden on the corporation, says UDF leader

KOCHI: The approach of the corporation councillors to the budget presented by Deputy Mayor C.K. Manisankar in the council on Saturday was divided along the political lines.

While the LDF members hailed it, the UDF members termed it as unimaginative and repetitive in nature in the discussion that was held on Monday.

Taking part in the discussion, Town Planning Standing Committee chairman E.M. Sunilkumar said traffic snarls in the city would become a thing of the past once the proposed Goshree-Chathyath-Mamangalam and Pachalam Rail Overbridges were completed.

The work on these projects is expected to begin this year itself. He also supported the budget decision to allot funds for the emergency road repair system and planting saplings in the city.

A.B. Sabu, leader of the UDF in the council, said the civic authorities were sitting on the Rs. 700 crore allotted to the corporation by the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission.

While most of the States have utilised the major chunk of the funds allotted to them, the city was

yet to fully spend the first instalment of the financial aid.

The corporation should thank the mission authorities for providing enough monetary support for its projects.

The support of the agency was visible in the enhanced revenue of the corporation as shown in the budget, he said. He also feared that the proposed bus service would eventually become a burden for the corporation. P.S. Viju of the CPI (M) congratulated the civic administration on addressing the garbage issue in the city. Johnson Master of the Congress criticised the budget as an unrealistic one.

The Deputy Mayor announced that the division allotment for carrying out various projects would be hiked to Rs. 25 lakh from Rs. 20 lakh, considering the request of a large number of councillors. Thirty-five members, including Standing Committee chairpersons, took part in the discussion. The budget was passed after the discussions.