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PCMC to conduct safety audit of Pune-Mumbai Road

PUNE: The [Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation](#) has decided to carry out a safety audit of the Pune-Mumbai highway before starting the bus rapid transit system (BRTS) on the busy road. The decision was taken during a standing committee meeting on Tuesday.

Chairman of standing committee Navnath Jagtap said a short notice resolution to appoint IIT-Powai to conduct the safety audit, at an expenditure of Rs 16.40 lakh, was approved at the meeting. The [World Bank](#) had suggested that the civic body conduct a safety audit of the highway before introducing the system.

According to the proposal submitted by the engineering department, there are 20 exit and entry points, between Phugewadi and Nigdi, from service lane to the 'express lane' of the highway. Also, there are five subways for vehicles to move from one side of the road to the other. As a result, there was a possibility that there could be some hurdles in operating the [BRTS](#) on the highway stretch.

The civic body had widened the 12-km stretch of the highway from Nigdi to Dapodi to 10 lanes, four years ago. The central

concrete stretch of the highway, which is called the express lane, allows vehicles to travel non-stop between Bhakti Shakti chowk in Nigdi and Phugewadi chowk. There are three lanes of service road each on both sides of the concrete lanes. The lanes adjacent to the concrete lanes are to be used for the BRTS buses. The civic body has already started constructing bus shelters on the road divider between the BRTS lane and the concrete lane.

[Shiv Sena](#) corporator Seema Savale had raised several safety concerns about the proposed BRTS bus service on the highway. She had made a presentation in this regard before municipal commissioner Shrikar Pardeshi about a month back.

wherein she pointed out that when the vehicles from concrete lanes try to come on to the service road, they would have to cross the BRT lanes, which may cause accidents with the BRT buses. Similarly, when vehicles from service road try to enter the concrete road through the merge outs, they will have to cross the BRTS lanes, with a possibility of causing accidents. Further accidents are likely to occur when vehicles from one side of the highway have to cross the concrete lanes to go on the other side using subways because they would have to cross the path of the BRTS buses twice.

The other issue discussed at the meeting was the proposal of awarding contract for collection and transportation of garbage in two wards.

Jagtap said, "A proposal for awarding the contract for

collecting and transporting garbage in two wards, selected as garbage bin-free wards, to Moshi garbage depot was not approved. Earlier, the civic body paid Rs 2,900 for two trips daily, while the new contract was to be given for Rs 7,400 for four trips daily. Municipal commissioner Shrikar Pardeshi has now directed civic officials to re-invite the bids for this work as the bids received are too high."

The health department had tabled a proposal for awarding contract to hire two vehicles to conduct four trips

from wards 14 and 17 located in Akurdi-Pradhikaran and Nigdi Pradhikaran for collecting segregated garbage and transporting it to the Moshi garbage depot at a daily cost of Rs 7,400 amounting to Rs 41.81 lakh.

A civic health official said that the earlier contract was awarded in 2007-08 for the same wards at the rate of Rs 2,900 per day. There has been cost escalation in the work due to the increase in fuel prices and labour costs in the past five years. The department received bids, out of which the lowest was of Rs 7,400. The health department will now have to re-invite bids and select a contractor. This will consume another few months.