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## NMC budget to focus on pending projects

NAGPUR: Standing committee chairman Avinash Thakre will present Nagpur Municipal Corporation budget for 2013-2014, his first, on Wednesday at 11am. However, there are many projects promised by NMC in last year's budget that have remained non-starters.

Last year, then standing committee chairman Dayashankar Tiwari had presented a budget of Rs1,279 crore but its total revenue was only Rs870 crore. That meant there was no money for many projects including London street, flyovers in Manish Nagar and Somalwada and setting up of Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Centre on the lines of Science City in Kolkata that were announced with much fanfare.

Another department that was ignored last fiscal too is fire department. Since last three years NMC had been allotting money to procure turntable ladder to fight high-rise fires but for some reason has not succeeded. The ruling BJP even failed to ensure construction of 30 cement concrete roads, its pet project. So far, only four km road is complete. The delay has only increased trouble for motorists on these roads as they have developed potholes.

For instance, the stretch between Bajaj Nagar and Shankar

Nagar square is in a pathetic condition with many potholes. Similarly, the patch near Dinshaw's factory in Gittikhadan area also needs urgent asphaltation.

Leader of opposition in NMC and senior Congress corporator Vikas Thakre said, "In 2011-12, most of the funds were utilized as elections were approaching. In 2012-13, BJP did nothing." He added that choked gutters, damaged street lights, overflowing drains, filthy streets, vegetable markets that look and stink like garbage dumps were everywhere.

Thakre also pointed out that the budget prepared by both municipal commissioner and standing committee chairman were exaggerated and impractical, added that if one goes through last five years' budget, the city has not witnessed any change as far as development is concerned. "They included many projects that are not possible in a city like Nagpur while money was spent on proposals that have no relevance to city's needs," he added.

However, sources said, BJP would now stress on completing pending projects on priority basis while keeping populist proposals for next year ahead of general election as it is expected that former BJP national president Nitin Gadkari will contest elections from Nagpur.

## **Only On Paper**

High-tech schools: Virtual Learning Classes in NMC-run schools remain on paper

Turntable Ladder: Rs7 crore earmarked but not used

Streetlights: Rs90 crore earmarked but not utilized

New dump yards: Rs5 crore earmarked but no land found

Mosquito free city: Rs50 lakh kept for procuring fogging machine