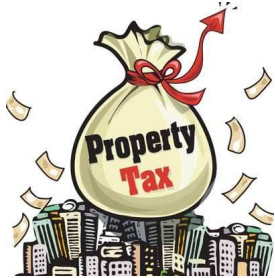


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Next target: Rs 1,228 crore property tax arrears



HYDERABAD: Despite a windfall in [property tax](#) collections in the 2016-17 financial year, over two lakh tax payers have not paid property tax to the [Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation](#) in the year in question.

According to official figures, piled up property tax arrears at the GHMC amount to Rs 1,228 crore including interest on tax arrears. Of this amount, the highest arrears of over Rs150 crore has to come from Khairtabad circle (10B) that covers upmarket areas such as [Jubilee Hills](#) and [Banjara Hills](#). The other areas from where arrears are due include Secunderabad, Abids and [Old City](#) (Charminar) areas.

The GHMC tax wing that gives red notices to the general public and warns people of seizing movable and auctioning immovable properties under the Revenue Recovery Act has not been able to collect tax arrears from about 10,000 top defaulters.

While admitting to the huge arrears, GHMC chief valuation officer Geetha Radhika said the actual arrears could be lesser as properties lying vacant and properties razed during road widening need to be removed from the list of defaulters. "Public sector undertakings such as HAL have not been paying the amount due to financial problems," the chief valuation officer said.

During the 2016-17 financial year that ended on March 31, the municipal corporation had collected about Rs1,250 crore from about 12.85 lakh owners (assessments) against total assessments of 14.80 lakh in Greater Hyderabad. Nearly 20,000 tax payers who paid their taxes last year skipped this year due to various reasons such as no waiver of interest on the tax amount.

For instance, in [Qutubullapur](#) circle, while about 64,136 people had remitted their property tax during last year 2015-16, this has come down with 60,159 properties making their payments. Similarly, in Kapra circle, in 2015 56,786 paid their tax amount and it has come down to 51,859 in the recently concluded fiscal. In one of the biggest circles, Secunderabad, against 1.10 tax payers in 2015-16, 1.07 lakh paid their taxes this year.

In some circles, the number of tax payers has come down but the revenue collection either remains the same or slightly higher due to new tax assessments. Though officials claim bountiful collections, reasons for good collections include Rs200 crore tax collection during demonetization period as the civic body accepted old currency notes. Nearly 1.8 lakh people

paid their tax dues to the corporation with old notes during the demonetization scheme. Interestingly, the number of tax payers crossed 10 lakh since last year after the government announced a nominal Rs 101 tax for people who had been paying Rs1,200 as tax every year.

"Property tax dues are more in upmarket areas such as Khairtabad. This is due to the circle having more number of court cases and vacant land taxes dues. Verification of each property has to be done to ascertain the properties and dues. The property tax on the vacant land can be collected while giving building permissions," deputy municipal commissioner K Satyanarayana told TOI.