

The Hindu 06.01.2011

VMC move on vacant lands draws flak

Staff Reporter [T+](#) · [T-](#)

Taxpayers oppose proposal to develop restaurants, gyms in public places

The Tax Payers Association (TPA) has opposed the proposal of the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) to develop restaurants, gyms and car parking lots in public places in public-private partnership mode. The association has felt that the corporation's move will deprive the people of open spaces earmarked for parks and playgrounds, which act as lung space.

Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, association president V. Sambhi Reddy and secretary M.V. Anjaneyulu said that more than 10 lakh people were living in the city and they had a right to assemble and organise meetings under Article 19(1) (b) of the Constitution. The corporation's move would deprive the people of their Constitutional right. The corporation was handing over all vacant lands, including that of old bus stand and canal road guest house, one after the other to private institutions and organisations, they said.

Now, it was poised to give away Ansari Park on Besant road and Brindavan Colony to construct shopping complexes. About 6,000 sq. metres of land at Bhavanipuram, 10 acres on Gunadala hill and four acres on Indrakeeladri were also being handed over. "Where do the people go, if the VMC is creating a concrete jungle? The children would be left with no land to play and people will have no open spaces to conduct meetings," they said.

Open space sought

The corporation should earmark at least 2,000 sq. metres of land in every division in the city. There was no open space in Governorpet for the public utilities. The Ansari Park could hold a minimum of 700 people. Hence, the corporation should withdraw the proposal to construct a parking complex there, and convert it into a place for public meetings. Instead of charging a rent of Rs.50,000 for PWD grounds (Swaraj Maidan), the authorities should give Swaraj Maidan and Gymkhana grounds free of cost to conduct public meetings, they demanded.

- ***The corporation's move will deprive the people of their constitutional right, they say***
- ***Allowing public meetings at Swaraj Maidan and Gymkhana grounds free of cost sought***