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## Roadside hawkers flouting rules, reminds Mayor

Express News Service

CHENNAI: Residents of Indira Nagar's 2nd Avenue are the latest in a long list to protest the Chennai Corporation's decision to move street side hawkers to the footpath outside their homes.

They feel the move will lead to an overall deterioration in local calm and argue it would be against the Corporation's plans to beautify the city.

Thankfully for them, Chennai Mayor M Subramanaian saw the resident's point of view. He immediately asked officials to pick a different place for the relocation.

"The residents have a point. This maybe the fifth location we have settled on and then dropped," the Mayor told Express.

On the reluctance of roadside hawkers at being relocated, the Mayor said, “We are building alternate spaces for roadside hawkers across the city. They might think about their businesses, but they have to remember they are flouting the rules by setting their shops up on footpaths.” The shopkeepers, on the other hand, complain at the potential loss of their livelihood.

“All the locations they propose to shift us are out of the way. The only thing shopkeepers can do there are gaze at each other,” said S Siva, a hawker of 35 years outside Thiruvananthapuram’s Jayanthi Theatre.

But he is quick to offer a solution. “We don’t want to move. We are very open to being regulated. Let the officials draw a line and we will not cross it. Then the pedestrians too will have enough footpath space. Everybody wins. But if the Corporation is still intent on relocating us, we have no option, do we?” said Siva.