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Chennai Corporation ropes in NGO to clean Marina Beach

CHENNAI: In the wake of several complaints about lack of cleanliness on the Marina Beach, the Chennai Corporation has dropped private operator Ramky Enviro and roped in Shudda, an NGO, to clean the beach on a pilot basis.

The civic body stated that it would treat and maintain the beach sand space as a separate entity sans roads and pavements.

"A separate division of officials have been given the task of monitoring the garbage clearance work so that the beach would soon look like coastlines abroad," Mayor Saidai S Duraisamy said during the corporation council on Monday.

Marina, which is the world's second largest beach, covers an area of 25.19 sq km where it stretches 13 km in length and in width between 300 and 437 meters.

Corporation officials said the number of conservancy workers deployed by Ramkey was not sufficient to clean the stretch. "Ramky said they required 40 staff with a salary of Rs 5,550 per person every month," the council resolution stated.

Shudda has been managing a 3-kilometer from Anna Samadhi up to Light House. It was already involved in four other waste management projects with the Chennai Corporation.

"Corporation officials told us they had concerns of the coastline not being tidy since Marina is an important tourist spot," said Nisha Thota, managing trustee, Shudda.

The new team has 132 staff including locals from the slums who split themselves into working on three different shifts every day. "Volunteers from corporates and other NGOs have also been coming in for clean-ups periodically," Thota said.

Ramkey Enviro handles conservancy works in three important zones- Teynampet, Kodambakkam and Adyar, which covers the Marina and Elliot's Beach.

Cleaning work on Besant Nagar was handed over to another private operator. While the beach sands alone have changed hands, Ramky will continue garbage collection from residences and is also responsible for sweeping the roads.