The Hindu☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ 01.07.2011

Sitting councillors to get Rs. 15 lakh as ward funds

var addthis_pub = "thehindu";   Staff Reporter

The Chennai Corporation will release only Rs.15 lakh each to the sitting councillors under the Ward Councillors Development Fund, as their term gets over in October.

Corporation Commissioner D.Karthikeyan said the funds will be allocated proportionately. "Some councillors have already submitted proposals for utilising the funds. We have proper guidelines based on which funds would be released."

In 2010-11, councillors spent only Rs.25 crore of the Rs.38.75 crore allotted to them. Some wards, especially those in north Chennai, are very small and the councillors had unspent funds.

A case in point is that of Ward 77 councillor Dravidanadu Munusamy. He said that in the last two years he was unable to spend the entire amount as the area was very small. "There is no land belonging to the government or the corporation in the ward. There is no major road either. I was able to spend the smaller amounts allocated in the first three years." The Ward

Councillors Development Fund was increased in phases from Rs.10 lakh in 2006-07 to the present Rs.30 lakh.

Mayor M.Subramanian said: "Around 85 per cent of the councillors had enough area and projects to utilise the funds in their wards. Some councillors wanted to know if their funds could be spent for other wards, but that was not possible. We hope that the proposed ward reorganisation during expansion of the city limits would result in bigger wards."

Leader of Opposition in the Council Saidai P. Ravi said that for councillors to spend their funds until October, estimates must have been drawn up in March itself. "Very few councillors have submitted proposals for this year. We have just four months to spend Rs.15 lakh. Our term gets over by October 21. Due to elections and increase in cost of construction material, works which had been awarded to contractors are yet to be taken up," he said.

```
$(function() {  $('#articleKeywords a').click( function() { var
keyword = $(this).text();  if (keyword.indexOf(' ') != -1)
$('input#searchString').attr("value", "" + keyword + "");  else
$('input#searchString').attr("value", keyword);
$('#simpleSearchForm').submit();  return false;  });  });
```