

BMC scanner on traders operating without licence

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Bhubaneswar: The traders, who have not obtained trade licence to run their businesses in the city, have come under the scanner of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). For running any business in BMC area, obtaining trade licence is mandatory but the BMC had no data about 10,000 traders.

With the help of Department for International Development (DFID), which provides technical assistance for urban reforms, the BMC has gathered information about the traders, who are outside the licence administration till now. Trade licence, like holding tax, is a component of revenue for the civic body. Trade licence fee is fixed according to the size of and nature of trade. There are different slabs of fee starting from Rs 200.

BMC additional commissioner Alok Kar said around 10,000 traders have been identified and they will be asked to obtain trade licence. "The DFID's hi-tech mode of getting the trader's information will help us generate Rs 2 crore from trade licence fee by the end of current financial year," he said.

BMC sources said the DFID, which engaged its technical staff, evolved an automated mechanism. "The information about the business establishments was obtained from service providing sector



such as commercial tax department and power supply department. The data were fed into the system called Rapid Match in an excel sheet. The automated mechanism helped filter the data. It also helped avoid overlapping of traders' information," said Kar.

Before the automated system of making trader's database, the BMC on its own prepared a list of 13,000 traders out of which around 8,000 have been renewing the trade license every year. "With the addition of 10,000 traders, the BMC will now have 23,000 traders under its administration, who will have to renew the license every year. In 2017-18, we will be able to generate Rs 5 crore from trade license fee," said a BMC officer.

To make the traders pay the license fee, the BMC has sent mails to 23,000 traders. "We obtained their mail addresses from different government agencies. The license fee collectors will be handed down the details addresses of the traders. Also, a trade license camp will be organized at six places in city to facilitate traders to come and obtain the license certificates," said a spokesperson of BMC.