

## When civic body continues oppression



Comments 0



Daya Nath Singh 18 January 2009 9994 views

Malpractices and corruption have invaded the public departments to a large extent. However, the people in general and tax payers in particular, try to cooperate with the authorities in the urban areas with a hope that their conditions would be considered in a positive way with respect, which they deserve. But this is not found in the treatment of the Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC), which has the responsibility of improving the conditions of the city and its citizens. It is the plight of a municipal market namely, Ulubari Bazar, in a central place of Guwahati city, the capital of Assam. This market is exploited by the Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC), since its establishment about forty years back, without providing basic amenities to the customers and traders of the market. The GMC's main 'objective' is to collect money from the market by hook or by crook. Ignoring the appeals of the Ulubari Bazar Committee (UBC), representing the traders of the market since the year 1971, to provide basic amenities, like boundary walls, electricity, water, toilet, sweeper and garbage bins, construction of market lanes and shops and stalls etc, the civic body is bent upon to 'suck even the last drop of blood' from the body of the poor traders. Failing to get any assistance from the GMC, the UBC had to manage the electricity for the market and constructed the boundary walls and market lanes by collecting funds from the traders and the general public. The traders constructed their own shops and stalls. The UBC had to engage

sweepers and night watchmen for cleaning and safety of belongings of the traders. Although the GMC continued collecting revenue on the wetland in occupation of the traders, it did not feel it necessary to realize its own responsibility to develop the market. Besides, it continued hiking the revenue on the land and trade license fees, arbitrarily from time to time. All of a sudden the GMC, arbitrarily and illegally increased the revenue by fifty percent on the existing rate of revenue, that too with retrospective effect from January 2003, through a notification on November 4, 2003. It is important to mention here that the traders had agreed to pay the revenue on the land to GMC, on the condition that the civic body would develop the market with the funds so collected. It may be mentioned further that the GMC gave a 'false publicity' about constructing a super market during the year 1980 and collected huge amount as security deposit for allotment of shops and stalls in the market. On the same plea, it increased the revenue of the land also. But the market did not come up. Again in the year 2007, it was learnt 'though unofficially' that a market with the financial assistance of Asian Development Bank (ADB), would be constructed at the market site. The ADB representatives visited, surveyed, arranged a workshop with the traders and prepared the drawings and project report during the year 2007. But the GMC did not inform the traders about the scheme. Instead it continued to issue notices to pay the money only. Further, the GMC increased the revenue to five times with effect from August 2008, just to show the increasing amount 'on the papers'. Now, it has come to the notice of the UBC that the GMC is not interested to get the market constructed through the ADB, and it is in search of private partners to construct the market under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) scheme. This creates doubt in the minds of the poor traders that they would lose their claim of getting a place in the market, for which they have toiled throughout their life. It may go in the hands of the influential people, who would serve the interest of the 'vested interests' in the GMC. The Guwahati Municipal Corporation has earned very bad

name from the tax payers as regards its arbitrary functioning and rampant corruption. The state government is also not keen to take any action against this mismanaged civic body.

---

Daya Nath Singh

Journalist; Guwahati Press Club office Secretary

---

**BY DAYA NATH SINGH**

'Gamusa' politics come on fore during festivals only

---

Concern over Hayagriva Madhav Temple repairs

---

Politics on Assam Accord

---

Politics is a 'chronic disease' that haunts a politician life long

---

Siddhartha Bhattacharjee felicitated

---

**ON THIS DAY**

Hagrama tsunami in BTAD, UPPL, BJP at a loss

---

Golok Samman 2023 Announced: Four Young Honourees Recognized

---

Lokdarshan: A Vibrant Folk Dance Extravaganza in Udalguri

---

Manas National Park Reopens for Visitors, World Tourism Day Celebration Planned

---

Webinar held: women entrepreneurship and women empowerment

---