

HC asks civic bodies to give sanitation workers their salaries

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New Delhi, Apr 19 () Delhi High Court today directed three civic bodies here to ensure that the March wages be paid to all the sanitation workers "within a week without fail".

A bench of Chief Justice G Rohini and Justice Jayant Nath also directed the civic bodies to pay regular salaries to the safai karamcharis "on or before 7th of every month" for smooth functioning of the corporations, whose employees frequently go on strike due to non-payment of salaries.

"Municipal Corporation of Delhi cannot be allowed to plead inability to pay salaries to their employees, particularly safai karmcharis and daily wage employees, on the ground of financial crunch or non-release of funds by Delhi government.

"We therefore direct that pending implementation of the recommendation of the 4th Delhi Finance Commission, the Delhi government shall ensure that the necessary finance is provided to the South, North and East-Delhi municipal corporations for payment of salaries to their employees," the court said.

It said the Delhi government shall process the financial statements submitted by the three corporations for the year 2015-16 and ensure that the amounts to which the corporations are entitled under head Municipal Reform Fund (MRF) released within four weeks from today.

"It may be true that the amount payable to the corporation in the form of MRF is only conditional incentive. However, having regard to the fact that the financial statements of the corporations have already been received by Delhi government and funds are needed for payment of salaries of the employees, it is necessary to ensure that MRF is also released at the earliest," the court noted.

The court's order came on plea seeking release of salaries in the first week of each month.

In January end, petitioner Rahul Birla had moved the court when safai karamchaaris had gone on strike, claiming that the authorities were not paying salaries and arrears since 2003 to the MCD workers.

He had said that workers of North, South and East Delhi Municipal Corporations had gone on strike in 2015 too leading to "accumulation of garbage for number of days at different places".

Birender Sangwan in a different plea had sought lifting of garbage littered on streets of the national capital due to safai karamchaaris' strike in January and that the strike be called off as it was causing hardship to public. The employees had called off the strike after their salaries till the month of January this year were paid. PPS ABA ARC