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SANITATION WORKERS' STRIKE DEMANDING REGULARISATION HITS WASTE DISPOSAL

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The level of civic sanitation in Dehradun has continued to deteriorate with the waste collection and disposal tasks being hit hard by the strike of sanitation workers demanding regularisation, among other issues. The Municipal Corporation of Dehradun is managing to maintain the sanitation level with its available resources but officials on condition of anonymity state that the long term solution to the city's sanitation problem cannot be achieved if the governmental and societal efforts being seen at present are to be relied upon.

The municipal corporation's sanitation work is affected considerably by shortage of staff, limited financial and other related resources along with political machinations at the workers' union, bureaucracy and State Government level. However, the major factor- that of the citizens exacerbating the sanitation problem in Dehradun, remains neglected with the public being passively encouraged to blatantly flout municipal laws. "Even educated and well established people- especially members of the business fraternity continue not only to litter but also view nominal charges amounting to about Rs 50 a month as too high for door to door collection of garbage.

There is legal provision for issuing challans to those littering not only public space but also vacant plots of land as is seen in most localities of the town. However, the generators of waste from dairies dumping cow dung in sewers to citizens dumping their domestic garbage in vacant plots in residential colonies and elsewhere on public space continue such illegal dumping of garbage with the municipal officials ignoring such blatant violation of civic regulations. The few officials who did try to act as per the law against such illegal dumping of garbage had to bow down to pressure from political and business lobbies, which demotivated other officials from doing their bit in ensuring the desired level of civic sanitation," said an official on condition of anonymity.