

Rat trouble poses threat to public

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Rats are creating problems not only in aeroplanes, but in the city too. Citizens have claimed that they are suffering several health and hygiene problems due to rising rat population. However, due to the allegedly apathetic approach of civic officials proposal to appoint rat killers has been pending for several months.

To control rat nuisance in the city, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) had six months ago had decided to rope in non-government organizations (NGOs) to carry out rat killing works in the city. However, the proposal is yet to see daylight.

Dr Padmaja Keskar, executive health officer, BMC, "Instead of appointing night rat killers, we have decided to rope in NGOs. The decision has been taken to get more manpower at our disposal to control rat population.

The NGOs will be remunerated depending on the number of rats they have killed."

According to the civic officials, the rat menace is rampant in Mumbai city. Besides posing health hazards to people, the rodents cause damage to household properties, utility cables, telephone lines and foundations of buildings. But due to inadequate manpower, the BMC has not been able to control the rat population in the city. Currently there are 44 night rat-killers.

There was a proposal to appoint additional 64 NRKs for 24 civic wards, but it has been shelved. However, citizens have alleged that the BMC has been dilly-dallying over the issue.

Activist Farooque Dhala said, "Even the decision to appoint NGOs has been taken long time back, but there has been no progress on this. They should have appointed them during the monsoon, when the leptospirosis threat is more." The rat nuisance is rampant in areas like Girgaon, Chandanwadi, Chira Bazaar, Byculla, Mohammad Ali Road, Nagpada, Lalbaug and Mahim."