

Nothing *nirmala* about new BMP contract

DH NEWS SERVICE

BANGALORE: A new contract for 'Nirmala Shouchalyas' (public toilets) in the City has stirred up a fresh controversy.

The contract labourers, 280 in all, say the old contractors have withheld their wages for four months, while the new contractors are refusing them jobs. They are now preparing to stage a protest.

The Bangalore Mahanagara Palike has awarded contracts for six 'packages', which will cover cleaning of about 85 public toilets.

"We've not been paid for

months and we've now lost our jobs to workers hired from Rajasthan. Two months back, the deputy chief minister had intervened and the Commissioner had assured us that he would direct the contractors to employ us," say members of BMP Safai Karmacharigala Pourakarmikara and the Shouchalaya Suchigarara Sangha.

Work orders

"In fact, he had offered to consider the Sangha's proposal for taking up one of the packages. Today, we learn that the contracts have been finalised, and

that work orders will be given in a couple of days. The toilet keys are being taken away from us," they add.

Meanwhile, senior BMP officials say the Palike auctioned 112 of the 116 toilets and that it has finalised orders for 85 of them, under six packages.

Problems

"The problem is between the contractors and the workers in the East zone and this needs to be sorted out between them. There are no issues in the South and West zones," they add.