

Panchkula: Key posts vacant for months, municipal corporation grapples with inadequate staff

Key posts in the municipal corporation continue to lie vacant since the past several months, while Panchkula grapples with problems of stray animals, repair of roads, sanitation issues and pending legal disputes over outdoor advertisements.

It has been an year since Anil Mehta, who was appointed as MC superintendent engineer, was given the additional charge of Faridabad. Mehta is required to be present in Faridabad for three days a week and therefore, he attends his office in Panchkula only for two days.

Three posts of executive engineers (AXN) have been lying vacant since several months and two that of municipal engineers. In the absence of required engineering staff, there is delay in executing several decisions, including works of repair and maintenance.

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Municipal commissioner Lalit Siwach, the former secretary of the Haryana housing board, recently took charge. “We are struggling with inadequate staff in almost all the departments. The SE has been given an additional charge, while other key posts are vacant,” he said.

Apart from three vacant posts of junior engineers, the office of executive officer is lying vacant after Manender Singh was transferred to Kaithal.

Other vacant posts include two of zonal taxation officers, district town planner, assistant town planner, two posts of patwaris, architect and one post of building inspector.

Siwach said: “It is not one function that is affected, but several miscellaneous tasks suffer. We have taken up the matter with the government and apprised them of the problem. The legal cell is vacant and there is no legal assistant.”

The post of naib tehsildar, kanungo, patwaris, legal assistants have been lying vacant since last year. “A number of villages were included in the MC limits, but we have no proper record of how much land is there and what is the status of the land. There are complaints of illegal felling of trees and transactions of land, but we have no record. Since there is no patwari or kanungo, it is a problem,” said councillor C B Goel.

Residents complained that the problem will not be solved until the issue is taken up on an urgent basis. “Panchkula has been ignored in all these years. There is lack of political will or the posts would have been filled by now. How will the officials execute tasks in the absence of support staff?” said Rakesh Aggarwal, a resident Sector 12A.