

AMC seeks help for 1,000 Ganesh idols

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Pune: Eight months after Ganeshotsav, the Alandi Municipal Council (AMC) is struggling to immerse over 1,000 idols collected from the devotees after the festival concluded.

Thousands of residents and mandals immerse their idols in the Indrayani river which flows through the town. The river is also Alandi's source of drinking water.

The civic body had appealed to the people to donate their idols to prevent river pollution, and thus collected thousands of idols. Some were kept by the riverside while some were put in a school room. As per the initial plan, the civic authorities were to immerse these idols in a scientific manner.

Chief officer Sunil Bhumkar of AMC said, "It was a daunting task for us to immerse these idols due to acute shortage of manpower. Now, we have decided to purchase a chemical solution de-

veloped by National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) to dissolve the idols."

Bhumkar said the AMC will develop a permanent facility where these idols will be immersed in the next few days. In the last two days, a large number of residents and some social activists protested against the AMC's delay.

Activist Sandeep Naikare said, "How can the AMC authorities ignore these idols for so long? If the shortage of manpower was the reason, they could have easily taken help from us and the people in the town."

Vilas Kate, another resident, said, "We have been following this issue with the AMC, but it didn't pay heed. Eight months on, the AMC has not taken any steps to find a solution."

Meanwhile, AMC sources said the population of the town has increased manifold over the years, but the government has not increased the manpower of the civic body to deal with the issues.